A DISCOURSE OF Schism:

Address'd to Those

DISSENTERS,

WHO

Conform'd before the *Toleration*, and have since withdrawn themselves from the Communion of the Church of *England*.

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The INTRODUCTION.

HAVING Compos'd this Discourse, with a Design to do you what good I am able: I may reasonably desire that you would afford it an Impartial and Candid Perusal, and read it with a Resolution not to condemn any thing in it, without a due Examination. This, indeed, is more than I can expect from those amongst You, who are byas'd with Pre-

judice, or mov'd with a false Zeal, or a Worldly Interest. But there are many of You, whom I consider under another Character; and who, I believe, may be ready to abandon their Mistakes, upon better Information. You may remember who it was that said, *That which I see not, teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.* And if you think it no Reproach to follow so laudable an Example, but are willing to receive Instruction; I assure my self, that what I shall here offer to You, may contribute something to your Satisfaction.

Job 34. 32.

You are like to find nothing here, that may give you any just cause of Offence: Nothing, but what proceeds from a Spirit of *Charity*. And if this, instead of convincing You, should only raise Your Indignation; I shall be sorry for Your sakes; and yet have no cause to repent, that I have endeavour'd with *Meekness* to bring you into the Right Way. And, I hope, that GOD, who knows the Sincerity of my Intentions, and measures them not by the Event, will graciously accept of them.

Upon what Terms the Rigid *Separatists* receiv'd You again, as Members of their Congregations, I know not. But since

since they have been wont to accuse our way of Worship in the Churches, of *Popery* and *Antichristianism*, of *Idolatry* and *Superstition*, they must needs look on You that once Conform'd, as Partakers then in the same Crimes. And if You resolve to do the like again, upon the like or other Occasions; they cannot but esteem You as Persons that would reconcile *Christ* and *Belial*; or that make it an Indifferent thing, either to come out of *Babylon*, or to remain in it. And, according to their own Principles, they may fitly speak to You, in these Words of *Elijah*; *How long halt ye between two Opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if* Baal, *then follow him.* 1 *Kings* 18. 21.

If You will vindicate Your own Proceedings, You are as much concern'd as the *Conformists* themselves, to refute the Charge, and Answer the Objections of those Men, against our *Liturgy*, and *Ceremonies*. But that Work is well done already by Dr. *Falkner*, and Others, to whom I refer the Inquisitive *Reader*. *See his* Libertas Ecclesiastica. My Business at present is chiefly with You, who think you may lawfully Conform with us; and yet have deserted our *Communion*: A thing, indeed, that is very agreeable to Flesh and Blood,

and which may make several Turns of Affairs more easy to You: But Wise and Good Men would suspect an Opinion and Practice, which are so much on the side of the World; and not like the Truth the worse, because of the Disadvantages that sometimes may attend it.

It is to lead you to the *Truth*, from which You seem to be at a great Distance, that I publish this *TREATISE* of *SCHISM*; In which I consider Your Case, and bring it to a fair Tryal. But to prepare my way for this, I thought it requisite to say something of *Church-union*; of which *Schism* is a Breach: For these two things being compar'd together, may give some light to one another.

SECT.

SECT. I.

THAT all *Christians* ought to be United together, is very plain from the *Holy Scriptures*; and it is a Matter of such Importance, that we find our Blessed *Saviour* repeating the same Petition four several times within the compass of three Verses, that his Followers might be *One*. It is also observable, that He pray'd, That they might be *made Perfect in One*; that they might be *One*, as the *Father* and Himself are *One*. And nothing less can be understood by these Words, than that He was desirous they should be *One*, in the highest and strictest manner of which they were capable, or that was possible for a Society of Men.

John 17. 21, 22, 23.

Ephes. 2. 21. St. *Paul* describes the *Christian Church* as a *Building fitly fram'd together, growing into a holy Temple in the Lord*: And Ephes. 4. 16. as a *Body fitly joyn'd together, and compacted by that which every Joynt supplieth.* Ephes. 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. He saith also to the *Ephesians*, and in them to all the Professors of *Christianity*, *I beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation, wherewith ye are called; with all lowliness, and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is One Body and One Spirit, even as ye are called in One Hope of your Calling: One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

The same Apostle writes thus to the Phil. 2. 1, 2. *Philippians, If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies; fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of One accord, of One mind.* How pathetick, how moving is his Language here? How admirably does it set forth the great care and concern of his Soul, for those,

those things which are the matter of his Exhortation!

I must transcribe a great part of his Epistles, should I produce all that they afford, pertinent to my present Purpose. But you grant, I suppose, in general, that the Unity of the Church ought to be preserv'd; and all the Question being, wherein it does consist, or in what things it ought to be maintain'd: To this I answer, That all *Christians* ought to be United, I. in *Faith*, II. in *Love*, III. in Outward *Worship* and *Communion*. I shall but just touch on the two former of these; but more largely insist on the last, in which the Controversy between us is chiefly concern'd.

I. All *Christians* ought to be United in the same Faith. For there is but *One Faith*; and we are obliged to contend earnestly for the *Faith*, which was *Once delivered to the Saints*. The *Christian* Doctrine is not calculated, only for some particular Times and Places: nor is it to be vary'd by them, but ought to be kept entire, and free from impure mixtures. *Ephes.* 4. 5. *Jude* 3.

And

And when it is so, it must needs be the same in all Places, and upon all Occasions: the same in all the Climates under Heaven; and under Persecuting Tyrants, the same as under Nursing Fathers and Mothers: the same in the Heart, and the same in the Profession of all *Christians*; for as we ought to think, so we are oblig'd *to speak the same thing.*

1 *Cor.* 10.1.

II. They ought all to be United, or, as St. *Paul* speaks, *knit together in Love.* Notwithstanding they are *call'd to Liberty*, yet *they are bound to serve one another by Love*: to be kindly affectionate to one another in Brotherly Love, and in honour to prefer one another. *A New Commandment*, says our Saviour *Christ*, *I give unto you, that ye love one another.* And whether he calls this Commandment New, because of its Excellence, as the word is thought to signify, where we read of a *New Name*, and a *New Song*: or whether He styles it so, because He requires it in greater measure than formerly; urging his Followers by his own Example, when He was about to suffer Death for them; to Love one another as he had Loved them; manifest it is, that the thing which He here enjoyns, is most acceptable to Him. But there is something more to be understood by

Coloss. 2. 2.

Galat. 5. 3.

Rom. 12.10.

John 13.34.

Revel. 12.17. & 5.9.

these

these words, than is commonly apprehended, which is, That our Lord having before taught his Disciples, to love their Neighbour, and even their Enemies, He now gives them a New Commandment, to love one another, as they were his Disciples. He had before instructed them to love all Mankind; but now it was matter of a *New* and a Distinct Precept, that they should love one another, with a higher degree of Affection, as being *Fellow-Christians*, and testifie it all possible ways, even to the hazard of their Lives.

Our Lord did not pray *for the World*, as he did for those that *were given Him* out of the World: Nor is it his Will that we should be alike affected to both. We must exercise *Charity* towards all, but with a particular regard to the Members of his Church. *As we have opportunity*, we must *do good to all Men; but especially to them who are of the houshold of Faith.*

John 17. 9.

Gal. 6. 10.

III. They ought to be United in Outward Worship and Communion. And to this they are obliged both by their Faith and Love: it being one of the Fruits, which both ought to bring forth, as worthy of them; and which they must produce, if they are sincere.

1. *Faith*

1. *Faith* ought to shew forth it self in Good Works; of which one is the Maintenance of *Christian Concord*. And this is so much the Effect of it, or hath such Connexion with it, that the *Christian Church* is represented in Scripture as a *Houshold of Faith*. They also that liv'd in full Communion with the Church, are, by the Ancients, call'd the *Faithful*, and distinguish'd by that Title, from the *Penitents*, the *Hearers* and Others, who did in some degree belong to it; but not being compleat Members of it, they were not admitted to all the Prayers, nor to the *Lord's* Table.

Vid. Justel. Not. in Cod. Canon. Eccl. Univ. p. 149, 150. & pag. 205, 206.

2. The Love of the *Faithful* being duly exercis'd, supposes them to live in Outward Communion, and keeps them in it. It is the Duty of every one of them to *Love the Brotherhood*; and of them all, to *Love as Brethren*: That is, they must Love as Persons that are Visibly of the same Family, or Society, under the same Lord. Thus is the title of Brethren to be understood in many places of Scripture: and in an *Apology* of *Justin Martyr*, as also in other Writings of the Fathers, it is apply'd as a Name of Distinction to such as were perfect Communicants. But not to insist upon the Limitation of it to

1 Pet. 2. 17. & 3. 8.

Act. 15. 1, 3, 22, 23, 32, 33, 40. Rom. 16. 14. Gal. 1. 2. Ephes. 6. 23. Phil. 1. 14. Coloss. 1. 2. 1 Thess. 4. 10. 5. 26, &c. Justin. Apol. ad Anton. P. pag. 161.

to that sense; certain it is, that the word was of such frequent use amongst *Christians*, who signified by it their Spiritual Affinity, or the near Relation which they stood in to one another, that they were much noted, and variously censur'd for it by their Enemies. *Lucian* says, their Law-giver perswaded them, That they were all Brethren: And *Cæcilius* suggests, that by some secret Marks they knew one another to be of the Fraternity.

Lucian. Tom. 2. p. 567. Ed. Amst. 1687. Cæcil. apud Minuc. Felic. in Octavio, p. 81, 82. Edit. Amst. 1672.

Calumnies and Invectives may be grounded on some Truth, or be mingled with it: and the Truth is, our Saviour said to his Followers, *By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.* And this could not be a meer inward Love, for that was not capable of being a Publick Badge of their Profession. Nor could it be such a Love as would permit them to be broken into various Sects and Factions: For it could not be gather'd from thence, that they had the same Teacher. But then only could they demonstrate to the World by their Practice, that they were under the Discipline of the same Master, in matters of Religion; when dispers'd, as they were, over the face of the Earth, they frequented

John 13. 35.

quented Assemblies that were held in his Name; every where professing the same Faith, and Communicating in the Ordinances which were of his Institution.

When He pray'd that they might be One, it was for this purpose, *that the World might believe that the Father had sent Him.* But the World would have discover'd no such thing, if they had been divided into many Parties, not enduring to have Communion with one another. The World would then have been ready to conclude, that if they had the same Instructer, he had taught them different Religions, or given them contrary Precepts; and consequently that He was inconsistent with Himself, and not much to be regarded. But when they liv'd as Members of the same Body, making it manifest that they were affected towards one another with the tendereſt *Charity*, and unanimously joyning together in the same Acts of Worship; they then took the most proper way to raise in the Adversaries an Esteem of *Christianity*; and to convince them that the Author of it, who had such an Influence on the Conversation of his *Proselytes*, was from Heaven.

John 17. 21.

For

For my part, I see not what just cause there can be, that they should be Divided in Worship, who are united in Faith and Love. On the contrary, it seems to me most reasonable, and I am sure it is agreeable to Scripture, that they who are of one Soul, should be of One Body; that they who are obliged to be of the Same Heart and Mind, should Speak and Do the Same things, and so *keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.*

To confirm this, and to proceed in what I design'd, I shall prove that the Church is a Visible and Regular Society; and then shew, that however it be dispers'd in the World, it is one Political Body. And if I make these things clear, it will be easy to infer from thence, that our Communion with it ought to be Visible and Regular, or suitable to our Station; and that the Unity of the Whole, as well as of every part, ought to be asserted and preserv'd.

I. The Church is a Visible Society; and Persons are admitted into it, continued in it, expell'd from it, and restor'd to it, in a Visible manner: Such things being openly transacted in this, as in other Communities.

1. Per-

1. Persons are Visibly admitted into the Church by *Baptism*. They are *Baptized into Christ*; and at the same time they are *Baptized into One Body*. The same thing makes them Members of *Christ*, and of his Body, and entitles them to all the Benefits of the Covenant of Grace.

Gal. 3. 27.

1 *Cor.* 12. 13.

2. They that are admitted into the Church, are continued in it in a Visible manner. In the several places where they reside, they are oblig'd to meet together, for the Celebration of Divine Worship: And accordingly we read of some of the first Believers, whose Example others ought to follow, that *they continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in Breaking Bread, and Prayers.*

Act. 2. 42.

The *Christians* in the *Apostles* Days, as well as afterwards, made use of several Outward Rites, by which they testify'd their mutual Agreement. Such were their Feasts of *Charity*, (a) at which the Rich and Poor did eat together as Brethren; and the Holy Kiss, or the

Jude 12.

(a) *Vid. Aring. Rom. Subter. L.* 6. *c.* 27. *& Baldwin. Comment. in Plin. L.* 10. *Epist.* 97.

Kiss

Kiss of Peace, as *Tertullian* calls it, (*a*) with which they saluted one another. (*b*) This indeed may seem a thing of little moment, yet was it the subject of an Apostolical Precept; and in the Primitive Times it was not esteemed a small matter to neglect a Ceremony (*c*) which was then in use amongst the Faithful, as a sign of their Union. *Rom.* 16. 16. 1 *Cor.* 16. 20.

This Union is much more eminently set forth in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, which is to be continued till his coming to Judgment, and so must remain a visible mark and constant pledge of Christian Concord. We being many, says St. *Paul*, *are one Bread*; that is, we are as that one Loaf, which we see at the Lords Table, and which is (*d*) made up of many grains of Flower. He adds, that *we are one Body*; and he proves it from hence, that *we are all Partakers of that one Bread.* It is 1 *Cor.* 10. 17.

(*a*) Osculum Pacis quod est Signaculum Orationis. *Tert. de Orat. c.* 14. *p.* 134.

(*b*) Vid. in Cerd. Adverf. Sacr. C. 151. N. 19. & Aubespin. de l'Eucharistie, *l.* 2. *c.* 15. &c.

(*c*) Vid. Tertul. ubi supra & Rigalt. in locum.

(*d*) Quo et ipso Sacramento populus noster ostenditur adunatus, ut quemadmodum grana multa in unum collecta, & commolita, & commixta, panem unum faciunt: sic in Christo qui est panis cœlestis, unum sciamus esse corpus, cui conjunctus sit noster numerus & adunatus. *Cyprian Ep.* 63. *p.* 154.

plain then, that our partaking of the same Bread is a manifest Sign of our being one Body. But, as St. *Austin* says very well, (a) Whosoever receives the Sacrament of Unity, and does not keep the Bond of Peace, he receives not the Sacrament for himself, or his own advantage, but that which is a Testimony against himself.

It is here to be consider'd, that as by one visible Rite, which is Baptism, we were admitted into the Church, and made Members of Christ; So by another, which is the Eucharist, we do not only communicate with our Brethren, but also with Christ himself. For as they that did partake of the Table of Devils had Fellowship with Devils; so on the contrary, they that partake of the Table of Christ, have Fellowship with Christ. *The things*, says St. *Paul*, *which the Gentiles Sacrifice, they Sacrifice to Devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have Fellowship with Devils. Ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils: Ye cannot be Partakers of the Lords Table, and*

1 *Cor.* 10. 20, 21.

(a) Qui accipit Mysterium unitatis, & non servat vinculum pacis, non accipit Mysterium pro se, sed Testimonium contra se. *Serm. de Sacrament. ad Infant.*

the

the Table of Devils. And says the same Apostle, *The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?* Certainly it is, as the words import; nor is this to be doubted by any Christian. ver. 16.

2. Offenders were expell'd from the Church in as visible a manner as other Criminals are disfranchis'd or depriv'd of the freedom of a City. The Church dismissing them, mourn'd for them as dead. (a) And the Persons ejected, as well as others, were sensible of this; that they were no longer Members, nor intitled to the Priviledges of the Society, from which they were expell'd. If they repented of their Enormities, they were far from believing, that their condition was the same that it was before the fall. They esteem'd the Sentence pass'd upon them, as indeed it was, a sad anticipation of the future Judgment. They (b) spent the day in Lamentation, and the night in Watching and Sorrow. They put on the habit of Mourners, and with Tears and

(a) Vid. Origen. contra Cel. *l.* 3. *p.* 142. *Ed. Spencer.*
(b) Vid. Tertul. de Pœnit. *c.* 9. & Pamelii Annot. in locum.

grievous Cries they bewail'd their own folly. They humbled themselves in Sackcloth and Ashes, and mortified their Bodies with rigorous Fastings. They threw themselves at the feet of those that went into the Christian Assemblies, begging them with great importunity to intercede for them, that they might be restor'd to the Peace of the Church, without which they did not think themselves safe, notwithstanding they knew the sincerity of their own Repentance.

4. The Penitents were restor'd to the Peace of the Church in as visible a manner as they have been expell'd from it. When St. *Paul* had given order to the *Corinthians* to put away the Incestuous person from amongst them, he afterwards directed them to *forgive him*, and exhorted them to *confirm their love to him*; that is, to ratifie it publickly by their reception of him, upon his Repentance, into their Society. In the succeeding Ages, the lapsed, or such as fell into grievous Sins, were obliged to pass through several degrees of a severe Discipline, in order to their (*a*) recovery:

1 Cor. 5. 13.
2 Cor. 2. 7.
ver. 8.

(*a*) Vid. Beveregi Annot. in Canon. 2. Concil. Nic. p. 71.

But

But being approv'd after a long Tryal, the Bishop and his Clergy laid their Hands on them, (*a*) and solemnly admitted them again to the Communion of the Faithful.

You have seen that the Church is a Visible Society; and the profess'd Enemies of it sometimes saw this but too well. For when Associations, or Fraternities (*b*) were forbidden by the *Roman* Edicts, (*c*) the *Heathens* thereupon persecuted the *Christians* as coming under that Prohibition. And the Apologists for the Sufferers deny'd not, that they were a Corporation, but allowing this, pleaded their Innocence. *We are a Body*, says *Tertullian*, (*d*) *by the Consent of Religion, the Unity of Discipline, and the Covenant of Hope.* He confesses, that if their Meeting together were like those Seditious Conventions which were punish'd by Law, it would justly come under the same Condemnation. But says he, (*e*) *We are the same being assembled, as when we are dispers'd. We are the same altogether, as when we are taken singly and apart; hurting no Man,*

(*a*) Vid. Coteter. Not. in Const. Apostol. Col. 169, 170.
(*b*) Eusebius. (*c*) Vid. Plin. l. 10. Ep. 43. & 97. cum Comment. Baldaini. (*d*) Tertull. Apolog. c. 39. p. 31. Ed. Paris. 1675.
(*e*) P. 32.

grieving no Man. And when Vertuous and good Men meet; when the Holy and Chaſt are aſſembled; it is not to be call'd a Faction but a Court.

II. The Church is a Regular Society. It is not a confuſed or ſcattered Multitude, but a *Body fitly joyn'd together*: A Body conſiſting of *many Members, of which all have not the ſame Office.* Some are call'd to Preſide and Govern, and others to be under their Inſpection and Authority; and for the good of the whole, both ought to be exercis'd in the proper Duties of their Places and Vocations.

Ephes. 4.16.

Rom. 12.4.

Clemens Romanus, endavouring to cure the *Corinthians* of their *Schiſm*, put them in mind, (*a*) that the High-Prieſts, and the Prieſts, the *Levites* and the People, had each their peculiar Work allotted to them: And leſt *Chriſtians* ſhould think themſelves unconcerned in that Inſtance, he preſently adds, (*b*) *Let every one of you, my Brethren, within his own Station, be thankful to God; not tranſgreſſing the Canon, or Rule which limits his Service.* After this he ſhews, (*c*) That however Death

(*a*) Ep. ad Corinth. c. 40. (*b*) C. 41. (*c*) Ibid.

was

was the Punishment of such as did break the *Mosaical Constitutions*, yet *as we are honoured with greater Knowledge than the* Jews *had been, so we are liable to greater Danger:* That is, if we pass our Bounds, and raise Disturbances, as they did. Order therefore is still to be preserv'd in the Church, and that more carefully than it was in the time of the *Aaronical Priesthood*.

In the New Testament we find that our Lord *gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers.* He gave them *for the perfecting of the Saints*, or as the Word may well be rendred, (*a*) for the compacting or joyning them together. He did it *for the Work of the Ministry, for the Edifying of the Body of Christ.* And some such Officers are always necessary, and must be continu'd, *Till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the fulness of Christ.* Eph. 4. 11. Ver. 12. Ver. 13.

Amongst the Officers of Christ, the Apostles are reckoned as the first, and were the chief: And since all the Power 1. Cor. 12. 28.

(*a*) [illegible], &c. Vid. Bud. Comment. Ling. Gr. p. 737. & Hammond. Annot. in 2 Cor. 13. 11.

that is purely Ecclesiastical, and which ought still to remain in the Church, pass'd through their Hands, it may be very fit to consider, what Authority they received from him; for from thence we may gather, what they transmitted down to Posterity for the Government of his Kingdom.

Now we find, that the Apostles were the Stewards of *the Mysteries of God*, and had the Keys of the *Kingdom of Heaven*. They were the Representatives of *Christ* on Earth, and acted in his Name, and in his Stead. They were his Ambassadors, and employ'd by him to reconcile Mankind unto God, upon the Terms of the New Covenant. As the Father sent him, so he sent them into the *World*; and accordingly having so high a Commission, they went about and labour'd to bring all Nations under his Discipline.

1 Cor. 4. 1.
Matt. 16. 19.
1 Cor. 5. 4.
2 Cor. 2. 10.
2 Cor. 5. 20.
Joh. 17. 18, 20, 21.

When their Work increas'd, they appointed some to serve Tables, or to provide things necessary for the Sustenance of the meaner Proselytes. Others they constituted not only to be Teachers, but Rulers of the Churches. And if they *Rul'd well, especially if they labour'd in the Word and Doctrine*, they were to be accounted *worthy of double Honour*, or a double

Acts 6. 6.
1 Tim. 5. 17.

double share out of the common Stock. And thus a Government distinct from that of the Secular Magistrate, and a long time oppos'd by it, was establish'd in all places where ever Christianity did prevail.

There is no need that I should here discourse of the *Form of Church-Government*, having prov'd in another Treatise, That this Government from the beginning, was *Episcopal*, and that the *Bishops* were Successors to the *Apostles*. And this I have done by such Arguments, as, I verily believe, cannot be answer'd, if it be but granted, That there is any such thing as an *Evangelical Ministry*, I had almost said as a *Christian*, remaining in the World: and with those that would dispute or deny so evident a Truth, whether *Scepticks* or *Deists*, or whatever else they are, I am not at present concern'd.

But were all Apostles, or Bishops? Were all Pastors and Teachers? No, certainly; but there was a Faithful People distinct from them, and under their Care and Charge; and what the Duty of the People was, may be gather'd from these places of Scripture. *We beseech you Brethren*, says St. *Paul*, *to know them which labour among you, and are over you*

you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their Works sake, 1 Thess. 5. 12, 13. Agreeable to which are these Words in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *Remember them which have the Rule over you, which have spoken to you the Word of God—Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves, for they watch for your Souls*, Heb. 13. 7, 17.

Men are generally averse from enduring any thing of Subjection; but we are to consider that the Obedience which is prescrib'd in the *Texts of Scripture* which I have cited, is to be paid by the Faithful to those that are *over them in the Lord*: Over them for his sake, and on his account. The Apostles, or Bishops of the Churches are said to be the *Glory of Christ*: That is, they are his Representatives in governing such parts of his Kingdom as are assign'd to their charge. The ground of this Interpretation I have mention'd in another place, (a) and taken from 1 *Cor.* 11. 7. where we read, That Man is the *Image and Glory of God*; which words, in the Judgment of *Theodoret*, (b) are not to be under-

2 Cor. 8. 23.

(a) Treatise of *Church-Government*, c. 6.
(b) Theod. Tom. 3. p. 172.

stood

stood with respect either to the Body of the Man, or his Soul, but to the Dominion that he hath from God over the Creatures. In the same Verse we read, That *the Woman is the Glory of the Man*: The Wife is the Glory of her Husband. She is, says *Theodoret*, as it were the Image of that Image, and as such, she hath power over the rest of the Family. It follows, that Bishops being the Delegates of *Jesus Christ*, the Observance that is paid to them as bearing that *Character*, is graciously accepted as done to himself, who hath said, *He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.* John 13 20.

We have seen, that the Church is a Body consisting of Governing Parts, and such as are Subordinate to them. And as on this account, it is Regular in its Constitution, so it ought to be in its Practice. For this reason, *the Spirits of Prophets were subject to Prophets*: Either to the Prophets that had them, or, as I rather think, to Superior (*a*) Pro- 1 Cor. 14. 32.

(*a*) Κἂν τὶς ἀρχιερέως, ἴσον τὸ μέτρον, καὶ πρεσβύτου καὶ διακόνου, καὶ ἱερείας διοικήσει, κἂν τὶς ἄρχων διέφερον, ἴσον τὸ πνεῦμα τοῖς τοῦ ἔθνους ἡγεμόσι νομοθετοῦν, πολλὰ λέγοντες, καὶ ἀμφίβολα· Greg. Naz. Orat. 26. p. 449. Ed. Paris. 1630.

phets.

phets. But certain it is, that even extraordinary Gifts were to be submitted to the Rule of Peace and Discipline; and Men that could speak by Divine Inspiration, might not exercise that power any farther, than was consistent with the Precept of doing all things *decently and in order*.

1 Cor. 14. 40.

The Word which is rendred *Order*, often signifies a Regular Disposition of things; or a due proportion of parts, with respect to the whole, and to one another. And in this, (*a*) so much of the beauty and strength of things consists, that St. *Paul* had great reason to rejoyce as he did, when he beheld the *Order* that was amongst the *Colossians*. For he knew very well, that when they invaded not one another's Work, but were employ'd in their own: When they, whose Office it was to Teach, waited on Teaching; and they that Rul'd, did it with Diligence; when they that were under Authority were submissive to it, and ready to receive instruction; by such a happy Concurrence they would adorn their Religion, and fortifie it against the Assaults of Adver-

Colos. 2. 5.

(*a*) Ἔστι δ' οὐδὲν ὅτου, ἐὰν ἐν τάξει τοῦτο μόνον ἐξῇ, &c. Xenophon. Oeconom. p. 664.

saries:

saries: They would do what was most beneficial to themselves, and acceptable to God, who is the *Author of Peace, and not of Confusion.* 1 Cor. 14.33.

III. The Church, however dispers'd over the World, is *One Political Body.* For it is the *Universal Church* that is said in Scripture to be one Body; and it is compar'd to an *Organical Body*, because of the close connexion of the parts, and that due subordination, which, as I have shew'd, there is amongst them.

This may seem evident enough, and yet the Question about *Catholick Unity* hath been so intangled with various Disputes, that I shall endeavour to set it in its proper Light: And for this purpose I observe,

1. That the Church is not said to be One, meerly as professing a Subjection to *One Invisible Head*, which is *Jesus Christ*; but also because all the Faithful are united and compacted, as in One Body. *For*, says the Apostle, *as we have many Members in One Body, and all the Members have not the same Office: So we being many are One Body, and every one Members one of another:* All being knit together, and fitly dispos'd for the benefit of the whole. Rom. 12.4,5.

As

As there is but One Root, so there is but One Stock, from which indeed some *Branches were broken off*, but many others were *ingrafted* into it, and it is still the same. The falling off of the *Jews* would have left an empty space, but the *Complement*, (a) or *Fulness of the* Gentiles, coming in, it abundantly supplies the Vacancy. And the *Society*, which is represented by the good *Olive-Tree*, is still the same, notwithstanding it hath been under various Circumstances and Dispensations.

Rom. 11.17, 18, 19.

Rom. 11.25.

As there is but *One Lord or Master*, so there is but *One Spiritual House or Houshold*. As there is but *One Foundation of Faith*, so all the *Living Stones*, and the *whole Building*, must be *fitly frame'd together, that it may grow up into a Holy Temple in the Lord*.

Ephes. 2.21.

As there is *One Shepherd*, so there is but *One Flock*; and all that hear his Voice must be of the *same Fold*.

Joh. 10.16.

As there is but *One Captain of Salvation*, so there is but *One Army* that is said to be *Terrible with Banners*; and which is never so formidable, as when all that serve in it keep their Ranks, and unani-

Cantic. 6.4.

(a) Πλήρωμα, Vid. Bud. Comment. p. 762.

mously

monsly discharge their Duties in their several (a) Stations.

As there is but *One Governour*, so there is but *One Holy City*: And as there is but *One King of Saints*, so there is but *One Kingdom*; and all must be *Fellow-Citizens*, or Fellow-Subjects that own his Dominion, or Sovereign Power. Revel. 1.10. Matt.13.41. Ephes.2.19.

As there is *One Prince of Peace*, so he would have all his Followers to *have Peace with one another*, Mark 9. 50. That is, he would have them live, not only as Persons that have Charitable Inclinations, but in an outward and visible Agreement and Communion together; as the Word signifies frequently in the *Holy Scriptures*, and in the *Writings of the Fathers*. (b) To the like effect, I suppose it is, that he requires them to have *Salt in*, or amongst (c) *themselves*. For *Salt* being sprinkled on the Sacrifices, and Offer'd with them, was a Sign of a *Covenant with God*; Rom. 14.19. 1 Cor. 14.33. Ephes.2. 14. and 4. 3. 2 Tim.2.22, &c. Ezek.43.24. Lev.2.13. Num.18.19.

(a) [illegible] Xenophon. ubi supra.

(b) [illegible] Pamel. Annot. in Tertull. de Præscript. c. 20. Arbaspin. de l'Eucharistie, l. 2. c. 5.

(c) [illegible]

(4) be-

(a) being us'd amongst Men at their Entertainments, it was also a Pledge, or Symbol of their Concord and Friendship: And our Lord, probably alluding to such Practices, would have his Disciples live as Persons that are united to himself, and to one another in a firm League; and a League that none may break, and expect Happiness from him, who hath drawn them into so strict a Confederacy.

In this Confederacy all the Faithful, of what Nation soever they are, are alike concern'd; for *Jesus Christ*, who is said to be *our Peace, preach'd Peace to those that were afar off, and to those that were nigh.* He hath brought together both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and *having slain the Enmity that was between them*, he made them *One*: Of the *Two*, *he made One New Man.* So that they *who were Strangers and Foreigners, are Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God.* They that were at a great distance, are now *Reconcil'd to God in one Body.*

See Ephes. 11. 14, 15, 16, 17, 19.

(a) Ἄλλος δ' καὶ ἄλλοις ἀναμίγνυται —— δίνας τε, καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ· Διὸ καὶ τὴν τῶν [illegible] ἀναπλήσεις καὶ τὴν ἄλλην [illegible], καὶ διὰ τὸ τῶν φιλόσοφων [illegible], καὶ [illegible], [illegible], καὶ ἄλλοις [illegible] καὶ [illegible], καὶ ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος τῶν τῆς φιλίας [illegible]. Eustath. in Homer. Iliad. 4. p. 100.

But

But no longer than they are of this Body can they claim this benefit of that Reconciliation: Nor may they hope for Spiritual Nourishment from the Head, but as it is *ministred by the Joynts and Bands, by which, the Body, being knit together, increaseth with the Increase of God.* Colos. 2. 19.

2. To maintain a *Catholick Unity*, it is not necessary, that there should be a Visible and Catholick Monarch or Vicar of Christ, with Jurisdiction over all Churches and their several Pastors: For Christ hath appointed no such Deputy; nor hath he left any Instructions to inform us, that there should be One. On the contrary, the Apostles, as I have shew'd, (a) who receiv'd their Commission immediately from him, were of equal Authority, and so were their Successors. *None of us*, (says St. Cyprian, (b)) *makes himself a Bishop of Bishops, or by a Tyrannical Terror compels his Colleagues into a Necessity of Obedience.* This he spake in a Council at *Carthage*, and with Reflection probably on *Stephen* Bishop of *Rome*, who injuriously invaded the Rights and Liberties

(a) Treatise of *Church of Government*, c. 2.
(b) Cyprian. Tract. p. 229. Ed. Oxon.

of his Brethren, as in succeeding times many others have done, who were possess'd of the Papal Throne. But a just Account of their Usurpations would fill many Volumes and belongs not to this place.

3. Neither to maintain a *Catholick Communion*, is it necessary, that there should be a standing Court for the Administration of the Government of the *Catholick Church*. *It is decreed by us all*, says S. *Cyprian*, (a) *and it is fit and just, that every one's Cause should be heard where the Crime was committed*. So far was he and his Collegues from approving the Appeals of Offenders to any remote Country, or Foreign Jurisdiction. 'Tis true, in some Cases, the Ancient Canons allow'd, that Appeals might be made from a Bishop to a Provincial Synod; and such a Synod might well decide Matters in debate within the Bounds of a Province: But beyond them, it had not the same Authority. And as for *General Councils*, they were only summon'd upon extraordinary Occasions, and having done their Work they were Dissolv'd. But that a *Gene-*

(a) Cypr. Epist. 61. p. 136.

ral

ral Council should always be continued; for the ending of Differences, and the Exercise of Discipline; that there should be such a *Perpetual Council* Establish'd in any place, and that the last Resort should be made to it from all the Parts of the *Christian World*, is not, I suppose, asserted by any. It can neither be expedient in it self, nor hath it any foundation in the *Holy Scriptures*.

But since the *Catholick Church* was not to be Govern'd by a Visible Monarch, nor by a Fixed Senate; since it is distinguish'd into many particular Societies, the Governours of which are of equal Authority, and not subject to one another, the Difficulty still remains, How it can be One as a *Political Body*. For resolution of which, I shall shew,

First, That the Government of it is One.

Secondly, That the People under it, are One also. But what I say of both, is to be understood of them, so far as they agree to Christ's Institution: For we can form no good Idea of Church-Government from the present broken State of *Christendom*.

1. The Government of the Universal Church is One. According to St. *Cyprian*, (a) who understood this matter perfectly, there is but *One Episcopacy*. And this is possess'd by the Bishops in such a manner, that they are all legally One, and every one of them is vertually all. But both these Propositions may require some Explication.

1. All the Bishops of the Universal Church are Legally One: That is, as a College in Law is One Person; so they being a College, in the Sense of the Ancients, (b) are One also. They all sustain the Person of Christ, and if Christ *be not divided*, neither are they. They are not divided, I mean, so far as they act according to his Will and the Rules of their Order. (c) But I meddle not with the particular Faults of any, nor am I accountable for their irregularities.

(a) Episcopatus unus est cujus à singulis in solidum pars tenetur. Cypr. Tract. p. 108. Vid. Episcop. Oxon. Not. in locum.

(b) Collegium Episcopale non aliud, quam Episcoporum universus Ordo, ac Societas quam latè patet. Omnes enim toto orbe Episcopi Collegæ. Hinc aliquando Collegium absolute, pro Episcopale Collegium: & Collegæ pro Episcopis, &c. M. Casaub. in Optat. l. 1, p. 5.

(c) Copiosum corpus est Sacerdotum concordiæ mutuæ glutino atque unitatis vinculo copulatum. Cyprian. Ep. 68. p. 178.

2. Every

2. Every Bishop is vertually all; or hath vertually the power of the whole Episcopal Order: And so United he is with the other Bishops in the Administration of the Government, that what he does in several Cases, which I shall mention, is as Obligatory to all the rest, and of as much force, as if it had been done by their actual Consent and Approbation. For Example.

1. A Bishop Ordaining *Presbyters*, does it as effectually, as if all other Bishops had assisted at it, and his Act is as Obligatory to them all. For the Persons so Ordain'd do not part with their Office when they change Climates, but ought to be receiv'd in all Churches as bearing the same Character, *a*) and be employ'd accordingly, if there be occasion, in the *Work of their Ministry*, without a new *Imposition of Hands*.

This, I know, is contrary to the Opinion of some of your *Brethren*, who are persuaded, that a *Minister* is only so to his own *Congregation*; and that if he Preaches to another, he doth it not as a *Pastor*, but as a (*b*) *Gifted Man*: And

(*a*) Vid. Constitut. Apost. l. 2. c. 58. & Coteler. Not. in locum, p. 187.
(*b*) *Survey of Church Discipline*, by T. H. Part 2. c. 2.

consequently, if he takes a new Charge upon him, he must have a new (*a*) Ordination; and this I confess is agreeable enough to their own *System*: For their *Minister* being a *Creature* of their own, and claiming his Title to the *Ministry*, from their Election of him, and upon such Terms as they prescrib'd to him, all the supposed vertue of that Choice must cease, when he is gone from them, and cannot bind another *Congregation* that hath no dependence on them. But however this is suitable to their own Principles, it hath no Ground in *Scripture*, or the Practice of *Antiquity*. Amongst the *Heretick*s indeed, in *Tertullian*'s (*b*) time, there was something like it; for with them a Person was one Day a *Priest*, and the next a *Layman*: But in the *Church* the standing *Officers* were so for Life, and in all places kept their Station, unless they were Depos'd for their Crimes, or advanced to a higher Dignity.

The Words of a *Judicious Nonconformist*, which I shall here (*c*) cite, are very

(*a*) See Rathband's *Narrative of some Church-Courses in* N.E. p. 43.
(*b*) Hodie Presbyter, qui cras Laicus. Tertul. Praescript. c. 41. p. 217.
(*c*) Ball's *Tryal of the New Church-way*, p. 80. *See* Hudson's *Vindic.* p. 144.

ry pertinent to my purpose: *If a Minister*, says he, *be only so to his own Congregation, and not in other Churches, Then are not the Churches of God One, nor the Ministry One, nor the Flock which they feed One, nor the Communion One which they had each with others.* And I add, *That if a Minister as such, be related to the* Catholick Church, *if he may be remov'd from one part of it, and take on him the peculiar charge of another, without a new Ordination*, as the *Presbyterians* generally assert, *Then are the Churches One, the Ministry One, the Flock which they feed One, and the Communion is One, as that of a Visible and Political Society.*

2. If a Bishop, or other Minister appointed by him, confers *Baptism* on Persons fit to receive it, it is as effectual every where, as if all the *Spiritual Pastors* upon Earth, had concurr'd in that Act. It is that *One Baptism*, which never ought to be repeated, nor is there any need that it should; for the same being every where of the same vertue, it both qualifies us alike in all places for *Christian Communion*, and gives us a Right to demand it in any part of the World. But of this more hereafter.

3. When a Bishop Excommunicates Offenders, they are thereby cut off from the Communion of the whole *Church*. We have been told by a *Dissenter*, *That whosoever will erect a Stated, National, Governing Church in* England, *must find us an Officer cloathed with Authority to Excommunicate from* Michael's-Mount *in* Cornwall, *to* Carlile *and* Berwick. But there is no need of such a Discovery to prove more than he demands. To prove the *Unity* of the *Catholick Church*, it is enough, that when a Bishop Excommunicates any Criminals of his own Diocese, the Effect of his Sentence reaches every where; and at the greatest distance, it is Obligatory to his Collegues, who being duly inform'd of it, are to regulate their Practice by it, and not admit those to *Communion* whom he hath Expell'd from (*a*) it, unless it be by his Consent, either expressly given, or vertually contain'd in the Canons of the *Church*. And anciently it was a great part of the Business of *Episcopal Letters*, to declare what Offenders were *Excommunicate*, that they

(*a*) Vid. Canon. Apostolic. 12, 13. Concil. Nicen. Canon. 5. Antioch. Can. 6. Epist. Synod. African. in Beveregi Synodic. T. 1. p. 675. Epiphan. Hæres. 42. c. 1, 2. Synes. Ep. 58. p. 203.

might

might every where be avoided or treated as Persons that were Ejected out of the *Christian Society*. This way of proceeding with them is a plain Argument, that in the sense of these times, *Ecclesiastical Government* was One, however the *Administration* of it was in many Hands: And it is also agreeable to the *Holy Scripture*, which will not suffer us to believe, that they who are cut off from the *Body of Christ* in one Country, are Members of it in another. They can gain no such Advantage by shifting Places: Nor can it be thought, that they are kept bound and loos'd on Earth, unless they may be Absolv'd and Condemn'd in Heaven, at the same time.

4. It follows, that when a Bishop Absolves the Offenders of his Diocese from the *Ecclesiastical Censures*, under which he had put them, he thereby restores them to the Peace of the *Universal Church*. Thus it was generally thought in the Primitive times; and the Persons so Absolv'd, having obtain'd from their Bishop his *Communicatory* (a) *Letters*, were then as much qualified for full

(a) Ἐκκλησιαστικὰ γράμματα. Vid. Justel. Not. in Cod. Can. Eccl. Univers. p. 232.

Commu-

Communion in Worship with other *Christians*, in all parts of the World, as if they had never been Condemn'd. All other Bishops to whom they apply'd themselves, were obliged to receive them into the Number of the *Faithful*, and to act by the Sentence of their Collegue, as if it had been their own. And this they did sometimes, and thought it expedient, when they were not well satisfied with his (*a*) Proceedings.

'Tis true, the Sentence of a Bishop, either for Condemnation or Absolution, might be revers'd or declared void by a *Synod*; and it was fit that it should, if it was Unjust, or sometimes, if it was only Irregular. If it was otherwise, he might withdraw it, or be concluded by the Votes of the *Synod*; and it was much better in such Cases, that One should submit to the Judgment of many, who were Assembled by Mutual Agreement for the *Administration of Discipline*, than that the great Benefit of *Synods* should be lost. But when One began to make himself a *Bishop of Bishops*: When he took it upon him to be their Judge, and to exercise a Jurisdi-

(*a*) Pacem tamen quomodocunque à Sacerdote Dei semel datam non putavimus auferendam. Cyprian. Ep. 64. p. 158.

ction over them, this gave a new Turn to the Affairs of the *Church*, and alter'd them much for the worse: It made a mighty Breach upon the *Antient Discipline*, and was the Foundation of the *Papal Tyranny*.

I have suppos'd all along, that however a Bishop is by his Office a *Pastor* of the *Catholick Church*, yet it is but some part of it that is allotted to his special care, as it was most expedient for the benefit of the Whole. But the further Consideration of this Matter being of great use, it may be requisite to trace it to the beginning, and to observe, that the *Apostles*, who of all the *Officers of Christ* were most at liberty, being sent to *Disciple all Nations*, might all have gone to one *Nation*, and left others destitute of help: But to prevent this, they distributed their Work in such a manner, as might be most for the *Publick Good*, and best answer the Ends of their *Commission*. I need not inquire, what *Countries*, or *Cities* fell to the Charge of this or that *Apostle*: And indeed our Knowledge of that is very imperfect: But this you find in Scripture, that St. *Paul*, with whom the other *Apostles* doubtless agreed, would not build upon *anothers Foundation*: He would not Rom. 15. 20.

stretch

See 2 Cor. 10. 13,14,15,16. *stretch himself beyond his Measure*, nor *boast in another Man's Line of things made ready to his Hand.*

As the *Apostles* employ'd themselves with great Prudence to carry on the Work of *Conversion*, so they dispos'd and settled things in an excellent order, and some Light it may give into them, that when there is mention in *Scripture* of a *Province* or *Country* where the *Gospel* was received, we read of the *Churches* of it. Thus we read of the *Churches* of *Judea*, of the *Churches* of *Macedonia*, of the *Churches* of *Galatia*, and of the *Churches* of *Asia*. These several *Churches* then were distinct *Societies*, under their proper *Governours*; who yet were United in such a manner as I have describ'd; and the nearer they liv'd to one another, the better opportunity they had of meeting together for mutual Advice and Assistance, and for the Decision of *Ecclesiastical Matters*. But when the Discourse is of the *Christians* of a City, which is to be understood as taking in its (*a*) *Territory*, then the Style is alter'd, and we read of the *Church* in *Jerusalem*, in *Antioch*, in *Corinth*; of the *Church* in *Pergamus*, in

Galat. 1.22. 2 Cor. 8.1. Galat. 1.2. 1 Cor. 16.19.

Act. 8.1. 13.1. 1 Cor. 1.2. Revel. 2. 12. 18.3,7. 2.1,8. 3.14. 1 Thes. 1.1.

(*a*) Vid. Justel. Not. in Cod. Canon. Eccl. Univers. p. 184, 185.

Thyatira,

Thyatira, in *Sardis*, in *Philadelphia*; of the *Ephesine Church*, of the *Church* of *Smyrnaans*, of the *Laodiceans*, and of the *Thessalonians*. If you will but be at the pains to consult the places to which I have refer'd you, you will certainly find the Matter as I have related it: And from hence the *Presbyterians* strongly argue, (a) *That how great soever the Number of Christians was in any City, and notwithstanding they made up many Congregations, as they needs must in some of the Cities, yet they were constantly call'd a Church, as being under the same particular Government.*

I differ from them in this, *That I believe the Government was Episcopal: For as there is mention of Seven Churches of* Asia, *so there were just so many Angels, or Supream Pastors of those Churches, and the like may be said of others.* But this I have more fully handled in another Treatise, to which I have refer'd you before for satisfaction.

'Tis true, the extent of Diocesses is not always the same, nor is there any certain Rule for it in the *Holy Scripture*;

(a) Vid. Jus Divin. Regiminis Eccles. c. 13. p. 213. &c. Hudson. Vind. c. 7. p. 154. &c. Blondel. Præfat. ad Eccles. Rectores, p. 76. Salmas. Apparat. p. 239, 240, 253, &c.

but

but since it appears necessary from the *Scripture*, and the Nature of the thing, that some limits be fixed; and since the *Diocesan*, and *Parochial Divisions* in this Kingdom, are confirm'd by all the Authority that the *Church* and *State* could give them, Private Persons ought to submit to it. For however there may be some inequality in such Distributions, that being hardly avoidable, no Disturbances ought to be rais'd about them; it being certain, that such Inconveniences can never be mended by Confusion.

II. The *Faithful People*, under their *Lawful Pastors*, make up One Body. This may be gather'd from what went before; but I shall farther make it evident.

1. From their *Duty*.
2. From their *Rights*.

From both it will be manifest, that they are Fellow-Citizens, or Visible Members of the same *Community*.

I. To begin with their *Duty*.

1. They are obliged, as you have seen, to Honour and Obey their *Spiritual Rulers*; to adhere to those that are over them in the *Lord*, and hereby they main-

maintain an Union with all other *Pastors of the Church*, that are One in *Government*. For if they are One with any of those that are One amongst themselves, they must needs be all (*a*) One.

2. It is their Duty to joyn together in Publick Acts of *Worship*, with that Company of *Christians*, which they find Established under a *Lawful Pastor*, where they reside, which may happen to be in *England*, or *America*, or at different times in the most distant places, as they remove from one to another. And from hence it appears, that all those Companies make but *One Society*, or *Catholick Church*, and are Members of it. For otherwise by passing from one Country to another, and consequently from one Congregation to another, a Person would lose his former Title and Benefit of being a Visible Member of *Christ* and his *Church*, and gain others in their stead; and this might happen as often as he changed Climates. But this is too absurd to need a Confutation. Heb. 10. 25.

(*a*) Scire debes Episcopum in Ecclesia esse, & Ecclesiam in Episcopo——Quando Ecclesia, quæ Catholica una est, scissa non sit, neque divisa; sed sit utique connexa & cohærentium sibi invicem Sacerdotum glutino copulata. Cyprian Ep. 66. p. 168.

II. That

II. That the *Faithful* make up One Body appears from their Rights, which are the same every where. In one sense they are every where Strangers on Earth; but in another they are at Home in all (*a*) Places. The Priviledges which belong to them as *Christians*, are the same in every Country, and they may as justly challenge them, as the Natives of it.

Some Cities who were associated together, did so value themselves for it, and receiv'd such mutual Benefits and Honours from their Concord, and from their being of *One Community*, that they express'd these things upon their Coins, and other Monuments of Antiquity, (*b*) which are yet remaining. But the *Unity* of the *Christian Church* is of greater extent, and takes in the *Faithful of all Nations*. This *Unity* is founded on a *Divine Institution*, and the *Baptismal Covenant*, in which they are all alike engaged, and not on a Formal Positive League amongst themselves. Nor does

(*a*) Οἰκεῖοι τῷ Θεῷ. Οἰκεῖοι τῆς πίστεως. Vid. Ephes. 2. 19. Galat. 6. 10.

(*b*) Vid. Spanhem. Differt. 9. de Præst. & Usu Numism. p. 692, 792. ad 796. Boines. Inscript. Class. 5. N. 20, 22.

it

it so much resemble the Union of the *Confederate Cities*, as that of a City in its self; which may consist of many *Corporations*. For all the Members of it are (*a*) Fellow-Citizens, and as such they have the same Prerogatives in all the parts of the World. But more particularly.

1. According to *Scripture*, and the Sence of the *Primitive* (*b*) *Times*, a *Christian* Travelling into any remote parts of the World, was intitled to the Rights of *Hospitality* amongst other *Christians*: Rights which anciently were held Great and (*c*) Sacred, and in times of Persecution, were very useful and necessary: He need but produce the usual *Testimonials*, (*a*) by which he might be known to be a *Christian*, and to have liv'd in Conformity with the *Church*, from whence he came, and he was to be receiv'd and entertain'd by the *Faithful* in all places with such Tenderness and

See Rom. 12. 13. 1 Pet. 4. 9.

(*a*) Συμπολῖαι. Ephes. 2. 9.
(*b*) Vid. Chr. Lupi Schol. in Tertul. Lib. de Præscript. c. 20.
(*c*) Vid. Philippi Thomasini Lib. de Tesseris Hospitalitatis, c. 7. & 10.
(*d*) Dum est illis communicatio pacis, & appellatio fraternitatis, & contesseratio hospitalitatis. Quæ jura non alia ratio regit, quam ejusdem Sacramenti una traditio. Tertullian. ubi supra. Vid. Canon. 2. Concil. Chalcedon. cum Notis Justel. p. 129, &c.

Liberality, as if he had been a Guest of the most intimate Friendship and long Acquaintance: A thing that *Julian the Apostate* could not see without Envy and (a) Admiration

If a *Christian* suffer'd Want, other *Christians* were to consider him, and provide for him as one that was of the *Houshold of Faith*, or of the same Family with themselves: And whether he was a *Hebrew* or *Greek*, or of what Nation soever he was, it was the same thing; he was not to be *neglected* in such *Ministrations*. It was also the same whether he was of this *particular Church* or another; for if one *Church* was in Distress, and not sufficient for the Maintenance of its own Poor, others were obliged to assist it out of their Collections; still remembring, that as they were of the same Body, so they were also Members one of another.

1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.
2 Cor. 8. 4. 9. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
Galat. 2. 2.

Lucian in his usual way scoffing at the *Christians*, represents them flocking to his *Peregrinus* in Prison, moving every Stone, that they might free him, performing diligently for him all Offices of Kindness, and sending Messengers to him joyntly from the Cities of *Asia*, to

(a) Vid. Sozomen. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 16. p. 618.

support

support and comfort him under his Sufferings. *It is incredible,* (a) (says he) *what Expedition they shew, when such a thing is publickly known: But to be short, they spare nothing on such Occasions.* And whosoever is meant by this *Peregrinus*, the truth is, that if a *Christian Brother* was in Distress, they gave him what Assistance they were able; if he was Imprison'd, or in Chains for Righteousness sake, they were not asham'd of his Bonds, but openly own'd his Cause, and chearfully Ministred to his Necessities, even when it expos'd them to the greatest Dangers. This they did not as a Matter of choice, which they might have omitted, but as a necessary Duty; and they did it so often, and that without any regard to nearness of Blood, or Habitation in the *Sufferers*, that their Union was Visible to the Eye of the World, and the *Heathens* who were astonish'd at it, did then make no doubt, whatever Men do now, but that they were of the same *Community*.

It is farther observable, that their contributing to the support of one ano-

(a) Ἀναίσχυντον ἡ τὸ πάθος ἀνδρείαν ἐπιδείκνυται τοῖς τοιούτοις, ἡνίκα δημόσιον ἐν ῥαψῳδίᾳ καὶ ἀγωνίᾳ πάντων. Lucian. Tom. 2. p. 567.

ther, is never in the Epistles of the *New Testament* call'd, (a) *A giving of Alms*, but *Communion*, or *Communication*: And I take the reason of it to be this, That the *Faithful* had, thus far at least, all things in Common, that the Wants of some were to be supply'd out of the Plenty of others, as out of a Common Stock, or Treasury, in which they had a share, as being Members of the same Society.

Rom. 15. 26. 2 Cor. 8. 4. 9. 13, &c.

2. The *Faithful* have every where a just Title to all the Common Ordinances and Priviledges of (b) *Christianity*. For instance, Are they here admitted to Visible *Communion* in Publick Acts of *Worship*? So they ought to be, if they come to the remotest *Churches* upon Earth. St. *Peter* said of the *Gentile* Converts, *Can any Man forbid Water, that these should not be Baptized*? And so may we say concerning those who are Baptized, and have done nothing to deserve *Excommunication*; *Can any Man forbid them the Publick Prayers, that they should not put up their Requests jointly with other* Christians, *in any part of the*

Acts 4. 47.

(a) Κοινωνία.
(b) Viz. σύσσιτον ἀπεκωλύθησαν. Constitut. Apost. Lib. 2. C. 58.

World?

World? Can any Man forbid them to partake of the Lord's Supper, when their demand of it is regular? Now, as St. *Paul*, when he pleaded at *Jerusalem*, that he was a *Roman*, gave a sufficient Indication, if it had not been otherwise known, that he was within the Bounds of the *Roman Empire*; So if a true *Christian*, in all *Churches* where-ever he comes, hath a Right to *Communion* with them, and may plead that Right, 'tis manifest that they all make up but *One Universal Church*, and are Members of *One Body*. Acts 22. 25.

Diogenes the *Cynick*, refus'd to be admitted into some of the *Heathen Mysteries*, because in order to it, he must have been made a Citizen of *Athens*, which did not seem agreeable with his Profession, of being *a Citizen of the* (a) *World*. And indeed if a *Christian* could only partake of the *Holy Mystery*, as the *Lord's Supper* is sometimes call'd, in a particular Congregation; I know not how it could be said, That he were a Member of the *Catholick Church*, or that in strictness of Speech, there is any such thing. But since in all the Nations under Heaven, where *Christianity* is esta-

(a) Vid. Julian. Imperat. Orat. 7. p. 238, 239. Ed. Spanhem.

blish'd, he hath a Right to Communicate at the *Lord's Table*, as well as in other parts of *Worship*; this is a plain Argument, that the *Christian Society* is the same every where, and is not to be multiplied according to the Number of the Places where it is dispers'd.

Jesus Christ hath broken down the *Wall of Partition* which was between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and permits not any thing amongst his Followers like the distinction which there was between the Proselytes, and the *Native Israelites*. There is nothing in his Gospel like that Inscription which forbad the *Aliens* to enter into the Inner Court of the (a) *Temple*, nor doth he esteem any to be such that submit themselves to his *Discipline*: He gathers his Subjects out of all *Nations*, governs them by the same Laws, and gives them the same Charter; the Benefit of which they may alike enjoy in *Samaria*, or *Jerusalem*, or in any other place as well as either. This shews, that living in a way suitable to the Dignity of their Profession, they are in all places of the same *Community*. And according to St. *Peter*, where he speaks of them as distinct from

Ephes. 2.14.

1 Pet. 2.9,10.

(a) Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. 15. c. 14.

the

the World, and with respect to it; *They are a Chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People, the People of God; as* Israel *was formerly the Lot of his Inheritance.*

3. Any of the *Faithful* that are personally qualified to bear an Office in the *Christian Church*, are capable of it or of being Ordain'd to it, in all *Churches*; and this also proves, That they are all United in *One Community*. The *Cumani* and others (*a*) were but imperfectly United to the *Romans*, when they could only serve in the *Roman Armies*, but might have no Command in them, and neither had any Voice in the Choice of Magistrates, nor might themselves be chosen. But according to *Aristotle*, (*b*) it is a principal Mark of a Citizen, that he doth or may partake of the Judicature and Government of the City. And since every *Christian* who is otherwise fit for it, proceeding regularly, may be advanced to a *Sacred Function*, in any

(*a*) Vid. Selden. de Jure Nat. & Gent. L. 2. c. 4. c. 169.

(*b*) Πολίτης δ' ἁπλῶς οὐδενὶ ὅν ἄλλον, οὐδ' μᾶλλον, ἢ ὅν μετέχειν κελεύει ἢ ἀρχῆς. Polit. L. 2. c. 1.

Κοινωνὸς ἢ πολιτικὸς ἢ κύριος. ἢ δικαστὴς ἢ κύριος, &c. c. 3.

Ὧν δ' οὐσία κοινωνεῖν ἀρχῆς βουλευτικῆς ἢ κριτικῆς πολιτείας οὐδὲν λέγομεν, &c. L. 3. c. 1.

Country where he is a Stranger, as well as if he were a Native of it: From hence it follows, that both Strangers and Natives are alike of the same *Political Body*. And this reasoning must be good, if *Aristotle* had the true Notion of a City, who is generally allow'd to write of such things with great exactness.

What hath been said, sufficiently shews, how the *Catholick Church*, however dispers'd, is *One*. But it will appear with the greater force, If you please to compare it with the Case of *Independent* and *Separate Societies*, in which you find nothing like it. You may bear Office in one of these *Societies*, but have no Title to it, nor have any of your Acts esteem'd valid in another. You may be Members of one, and justly excluded from another. You may enjoy the Priviledges of one, and want those of another. You may be banish'd from one, and made Denizons of another. Acts of State bind only the Subjects of the State, and oblige not Forreigners that are under another Dominion. But this demonstrates the *Unity* of the *Catholick Church*, that what is done by one Governour, or Bishop, is valid amongst all the rest; and taht a private *Christian* who

who hath an Obligation on him, and a Right to an actual and full *Communion* with a particular *Church*, hath the like with all other *Churches*, where he happens to reside.

Having prov'd, that the *Universal Church* is *One Body*, I shall only add, what gives us great encouragement to preserve the Unity of it, and affords us a most delightful Contemplation, that it is now the same *Body* that it was from the Beginning. For as a City may remain the same for a Thousand Years, or even to the End of the World, and is therefore said by some Ancient Writers to be (*a*) Immortal: So is the *Church* the same that it was from the first Foundation of it. And from hence it is that if we *Communicate* with those who derive their Ministry by Succession from the *Apostles*, and with such Professors of *Christianity* as adhere to that Ministry, we do it vertually, or by Interpretation, with the Apostles themselves, and with the Saints, Confessors, and Martyrs, that rest from their Labours, and are now in Happiness, waiting for a Glorious Resurrection.

(*a*) *Vid*, Grot. de Jure B. & P. l. 2. c. 9. Sect. 3.

To

To this effect *Tertullian* (a) says, That *from the Apostolical Churches, all other Churches borrowed the Branch of Faith, and Seeds of Doctrine; and from them it is daily that Churches become such, and so are esteem'd Apostolical, as being the Off-spring of the Apostolical Churches. Every thing must be reckon'd with its Original; and therefore so many Great Churches are as the One First Church constituted by the Apostles, and from which all are descended. So all are First and Apostolical, whilst they alike approve the Unity: Whilst there is amongst them the Communication of Peace, the Title of Brotherhood, the Covenant of Hospitality; the Rights of which nothing preserves, but the Tradition of the same Sacrament, or Mystery.*

But this is not all: For being in *Communion* with the *Apostles*, we are so with the Father and the Son. *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you,* says St. *John*, *that you also may have Fellowship with us;* and truly *our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* The *Father* will take care of us as his Peculiar People, and the *Son* will Influence and Govern us as our

1 Joh. 1. 3.

(a) Præscript. c. 20. p. 208, 209.

Head;

Head; a *Head* that hath such a Tenderness for his *Church*, that he is represented in Scripture, as making up One Person with it: *For*, says the Apostle, *as the Body is One, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that One Body, being many, are One Body: So also is Christ.* And being of his *Church*, we are assur'd, that he will *nourish and cherish us as Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones.*

1 Cor. 12. 12.

Ephes. 5. 29, 30.

SECT.

SECT. II.

WE have seen that all *Christians* ought to be United in *Faith*, *Love*, and in *Outward Worship* and *Communion*: And if you grant this, you must also acknowledge, that a Breach of Union in any of these things, wherever the fault is, must needs be sinful. For it is plain,

I. That if there be but *One Faith* delivered to the Saints, for which they must earnestly contend, they grievously offend who add New Articles to it, or take away from it such as are already reveal'd, or otherwise deprave it by a mixture of Falshood. And so far as they do so, we ought to depart from them, and not betray or deny the Truth in compliance with them.

II. If

II. If all the *Faithful* must be firmly link'd together in *Love*, this must condemn all *Discord* and *Malice*, all *Envying* and *Strife* amongst them, as being directly against the *Spirit of Charity*. And indeed where these things are, *there is Confusion and every Evil Work.* See 1 Cor. 3. 3. Jam. 3. 16.

III. If all the *Faithful* are obliged to live in *Outward Communion*, as Visible Members of the *same Body*, then such a *Division* in the *Body* as is a Breach of that *Communion*, must be Criminal; a thing, I know, that many of you are unwilling to hear of: But Mr. *Baxter* (a) has suggested a reason of it, which I hope, does not reach you all. *Whence is it*, says he, *but for want of Self-denial, that Men that know that Whoredom, and Drunkenness and Theft are Sins, can be ignorant in the midst of Light, that Discord and Church-Divisions are Sins? And that they hear him with Heart-rising Enmity, or Suspicion, that doth declaim against them? As if Uniting were become the Work of Satan, and Dividing were become the Work of Christ!*

(a) Treatise of *Self-denial*, Ep. Monit. A. D. 1659.

These

These Words I would recommend to your serious Thoughts; and being now come to that which is the chief Subject of our Debate, I desire you sincerely to consider, that not only *Modern Writers*, but the *Fathers*, who were no Parties in our present Controversies, speak of *Schism* as a most horrid Crime. St. *Optatus* (*a*) mentions it as a *mighty Wickedness*; and argues, that it is worse than Murder and Idolatry. And St. *Chrysostom* (*b*) affirms, That *nothing equally provokes God, as the Division of his Church.* He makes it equal to the Crucifying of *Christ*: *Which*, he says, *was for the good of the World, however not intended; but this*, continues he, *affords no Benefit, but the greatest Mischief.*

To mention no more at this time, St. *Irenaeus* (*c*) says, That *God will judge the* Schismaticks, *who having not the Love of God, but being intent on their own Profit, rather than the Peace of the Church, for small Matters, or for any, divide the Great and Glorious Body of Christ, and do what in them lies to kill it, speaking Peace, but making War; straining indeed at a Gnat, and swallowing a Camel.*

(*a*) Ingens flagitium Schismatis. l. 1. p. 22. p. 23.
(*b*) Chrys. Tom. 3. p. 822.
(*c*) Advers. Hæres. l. 4. c. 62.

You

You need not think it strange, that these Excellent Men, who had seen the sad Effects of *Church-Divisions*, express'd such an Abhorrence of them. St. *Paul* himself reckons *Seditions* and *Heresies* with *Adultery*, *Fornication*, *Uncleanness*, *Lasciviousness*, *Idolatry*, *Witchcraft*, and other Works of the Flesh; of which he says, That *they that practise such things, shall not enter into the Kingdom of God*, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.

The Word rendred *Seditions* (*a*) signifies *Schisms*, and it is us'd for Dissentions about *Matters Ecclesiastical*; and *Heresies* in this place are *Sects* and *Factions*. The various *Sects* of Orators (*b*) and *Philosophers* (*c*) were called *Heresies*: And St. *Austin* (*d*) speaks the Language of more Ancient Authors; where he says, That *Aristotle*, even in the Time of his Master, drew very many into his *Heresie*: But the *Christians* living conformable to the Precepts of *Jesus Christ*, were judged by their Ene-

Rom. 16. 17.
1 Cor. 3. 3.

(*a*) Διχοστασία.
(*b*) Ἀπολλοδώρου αἱρεσις καὶ Θεοδώρου. Strab. lib. 13.
(*c*) Pythagoræ, hisque qui ejus Hæresim fuerunt secuti, &c. Vitruv. de Architect. Præfat. l. 5. Ἔστιν φασὶν αἵρεσις καὶ ἀγωγὰς εἶναι. Diog. Laert. Proœm. Segm. 19. Plurimosque discipulos vivo adhuc Præceptore in suam hæresim congregasset.
(*d*) Aug. de Civit. Dei, l. 8. c. 12.

mies

mies to be one *Heresie*; and they were indeed of *One Way*. He gave them all the same Rule, and as long as they are Followers of that, there cannot be such Differences amongst them, as are usual amongst those that are of separate Schools, and under opposite Masters, but they must all appear Unanimous in the Matters of *Faith* and *Worship*. 'Tis true, that many professing *Christianity*, became irregular, and departing from their Duty, did break the Unity of the *Church*. Such were the *Corinthians*, to whom St. *Paul* says, *I hear that there are Divisions among you, and I partly believe it*; at which he did not wonder, considering their Temper; *for*, he adds, *there must be also Heresies among you, that those who are approved, may be made manifest*.

Acts 24.5. & 28. 22.
Acts 24.14.
1 Cor. 11.18.
v. 19.

By *Heresies* we are not here to understand false Doctrines, or obstinate Errors in the Fundamental Articles of *Religion*, but such Contentions and making of Parties as disturb'd the Peace at *Corinth*. The *Apostle* intimates, that such there would certainly be, by reason of the Pravity of Mens Minds; but he condemns them as *Carnal*, and speaks of them as things that are avoided by all that are *approved*. And according to this

this Interpretation, a Man that is a *Heretick*, and who is to be rejected, is the *Sectary*, who draws *Disciples* after him, or is of the Number of those that are seduced by him. Tit. 3. 10.

It becomes not me to pass Judgment on particular Persons, whom we see engaged in *Church-Divisions*, nor to determine what their final State will be. To their own Master they must stand or fall: And he only knows what merciful Allowances he will make for their Mistakes, for the Prejudices of their Education, or the like. This *hidden thing belongs to him*, and therefore cannot be the Rule of our Actions But since it appears from what he hath revealed, that *Schism* is a Sin, a hainous Sin, a Sin that, without pardoning Mercy, as certainly leads to Perdition as any other; I thought the greatest piece of Charity I can do you, would be, not to flatter you in your Way, which, I verily believe, is *Schismatical*; but to shew you the great danger of it, and do what lies in me, to rescue you from the Wrath to come.

In order to this, I shall shew you,

I. What is the Nature of *Schism*:

II. What Grounds I have to apprehend that you are deeply concerned in it.

III. Examine the Arguments that have been offer'd on your part, to excuse you from the Guilt of it.

IV. I shall represent to you the said Consequences of it; and so proceed to the Conclusion. And may Almighty God inlighten your Minds, and dispose your Hearts to an attentive perusal of what I write for your Advantage.

I. *Schism*, in the Notion of it that we are now upon, is a causless Breach of *Outward Ecclesiastical Communion.* Not but that it is sinful before it breaks out into Action, when it is only form'd in the Heart, or is only in design; but that we cannot take cognizance, or judge of it, before it appears abroad in opposition to the *Visible Church*; and when it does so, there are several degrees of it.

1. Sometimes there is a *Schism within a Church.*

2. Sometimes *from a Church.*

3. Some-

3. Sometimes it proceeds to set up *Opposite Churches and Officers.*

4. Sometimes it goes yet further, and Constitutes *Pastors without any Lawful Authority, or Ordination.*

I know not how it can go higher; but all these particulars may be aggravated with many Circumstances, which do not come under our present consideration.

1. Sometimes there is a *Schism within a Church*; when its *Outward Communion* is in some Measure continued, but shatter'd and broken, so that it appears not with the Beauty and Strength of a *Regular Society*. Thus it was amongst the *Corinthians*, to whom St. *Paul* says, *When ye come together in the Church, I hear that there are Divisions among you.* 1 Cor. 11. 18 Being very Contentious, they brought great Disorders into their *Assemblies*. Being Factious, and much given to siding and making Parties, *One said, I am of* Paul; *another, I am of* Apollos. 1 Cor. 3. 4. The *Apostle* therefore reproves them as *Carnal*; and beseeches them by the *Lord Jesus Christ*, that they would *all speak the same thing, and that there should be no Divisions among them.* 1 Cor. 1. 10. And in another place he puts them in mind, that there should be *no Schism in the Body*, but *the* 1 Cor. 12. 25.

Members should have the same care one of another.

But whereas Dr. *Owen* (a) contends, that the Notion of *Schism* is only to be taken from the Instances of it at *Corinth*, and consequently that *Schism* is only a Division *in* a *Particular Church*, but not *from* it; it may seem very strange, and is, I believe, of his own Invention. He declares, That he went *out of the Common Road*; and would persuade us, that he made considerable Discoveries. *What a Flood of Abominations*, (b) says he, *doth this Business of* Schism *seem to be, as rolling down to us through the Writings of* Cyprian, Austin, *and* Optatus *of old; the Schoolmen, Decrees of Popish Councils, with the Contrivances of some among our selves concern'd to keep up the swell'd Notion of it!* But he pretends to have traced it to its Fountain, and compares it to *a dribling* (c) *Gutter*. And whereas *Protestants* had been apt to impute it to one another, he intimates, that, upon *irrefragable Evidence*, he would *acquit them all from their several Concernments*

(a Owen of Schism, p. 42.
(b Pag. 275.
(c Pag. 69.

in

in the Charge of (a) *it* : That, as he speaks, *the whole Guilt of this Crime might be put into an* Ephah, *and carried to build it an House in the Land of* Shinar.

He confesses, that in the Management of this Work, he had *the Prejudice of many Ages, the Interest of most* Christians, *and mutual consent of Parties at Variance, to contend withal.* Yet hath his Project been approv'd by many: And *Lewis du Moulin* says, as in a Rapture of Admiration, That *the whole* Christian *World, from the Apostles Times, never knew such a Notion of the Nature of* Schism, *till the Dr. taught it them* : Which, I suppose, is very true : But he might have added, as another *Dissenter* thinks, (b) that *neither was it known to the Apostles themselves.*

But is *Schism* a Sin? Is it a thing, even in the Confession of Dr. *Owen* himself, *That being unrepented of, will ruine a Man's Eternal* (c) *Condition*? And did no Body knew wherein it did consist? Were all *Christians* careful to avoid it under

(a) Pag. 11.
(b) *Dr.* Cawdry. *Sis: his* Independency *further prov'd to be a* Schism. p. 15.
(c) Pag. 8.

the Peril of their Souls? And did none of them discover what it was? Did the *Ancient Fathers* speak such terrible things against it, and none of them understand what they said? Did they make no doubt to lay it to the Charge of the *Novatians* and *Donatists*? And might these be Innocent all the while? Are the Scriptures so plain in their Directions about things that are necessary either to be done or avoided? And are they so obscure in this, that for the space of about Sixteen hundred Years, neither the Learned, nor Unlearned could find out what they meant, till in this present Age *One* arose, who made the Discovery? But in this case the Novelty of his Conceit is a sufficient Argument against it; and it is in effect, an acknowledgment, that the *Independents* wanted some New thing for the Vindication of their Practice, which, I am sure, cannot be defended by the common receiv'd Principles of *Christianity*.

But because the Doctor is of no small Reputation amongst *Dissenters*, let us consider a little the force of his Reasoning: The *Schism* at *Corinth*, was a Disorder *in* a *Church*; and from hence he infers, That a Separation *from a Church*,

Church, is not *Schism*; and that for the Separatist to be a *Schismatick*, *is* (a) *impossible*. But can you really believe, that one would do you wrong, if he made a small Rent in your Garment, and none if he should tear it in pieces? That he would be injurious if he Wounded your Hand, and Innocent if he cut it off? Can you imagine, that a Mutiny begun in a Camp, or Kingdom, is Seditious; and that an open Revolt is not so? But as well may you be persuaded of all this, as that *Faction* and *Disorder in a Church*, is a Sinful Division, and to *Desert* it, as unworthy of Communion, is none.

Whether such a Desertion be expresly stiled *Schism* in Scripture, is not material, if it be a greater Division than that which is call'd by that Name. For, as I have always thought, when any thing is forbidden as sinful, others that are worse, but of the same kind, come under the same Prohibition. Otherwise things that for their Filthiness, are not fit to be Nam'd, may be very fit to be done; and Holiness may be consistent with the most detestable Pollutions.

2. A farther degree of *Schism*, is a causeless Separation *from* the *Church*: For it

(a) Pag. 51.

is worse in its own Nature, to renounce a Society with which one is obliged to live in Communion, and ordinarily more tends to the Dissolution of it, than it does to create some Disturbances in it, as it also gives more Scandal in the Eye of the World.

'Tis true, the Disturbances may sometimes be so great, that the Desertion of those that raise or keep them up, may be more desirable, or a less Evil to the *Church*, than their continuance in it; but to the Offenders themselves, it can be of no advantage, but is rather an Addition to their Guilt and Misery. *I would*, says St. *Paul* to the *Galatians, that they were even cut off, which trouble you*; (a) or that unsettle, or move you from your Stations: And to be cut off, doubtless he esteem'd a very great Judgment. And yet under this, the *Sectary* brings himself, of whom the same *Apostle* says, That he is *Self-condemn'd*: Not that the *Sectary* confess'd his Fault; nor that he had secret Convictions for it; for these could not have been Ground of his Rejection, or of Proceedings against him; but by wilfully departing from the Unity of

Tit. 3. 2.

(a) Ὄφελον ἀποκόψονται. Galat. 5. 12.

the

the *Church*, he in effect inflicted on himself the Punishment which the *Church* useth to the greatest Malefactors, and so was broken off from the *Body of Christ*.

I need not here enter upon the Debate, whether *Episcopal Ordinations* and *Baptism* confer'd in *Schism*, are valid, it being sufficient for my present purpose, that according to the Rule of *Catholick Unity*, which is grounded on the *Scripture*, and was Universally receiv'd by the *Faithful* in the purest Ages, *Schismaticks* persisting in their Separation, can do nothing that can qualifie them for *Communion* with any part of the *Catholick Church*; and therefore in that State they must be excluded from the whole: Being wilfully divided from some, they cannot be United to the rest of the *Christian Society*, which are One amongst themselves, and all *Members one of another*.

If they are not of the Body, I do not see how they can be United to the Head. *Break off a Bough from the Tree*, says S. *Cyprian*, (a) *and it blossoms no more. Divide a River from the Fountain, and it will be dried up.* And this in his judg-

(a) Cyprian. de Unit. Eccles. p. 108.

ment

ment sets forth the Condition of those that cut off themselves from the *Christian Church.* He adds a little after, *If a Person could escape, who was out of the Ark of* Noah, *then shall one escape also, who is out of the Church*: *But*, says our Lord, *he that is not with me, is against me*; *and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth*: And *he that breaks the Peace and Concord* which Christ hath established, *acts against Christ himself.*

Mat. 12.30.

In like manner St. *Ignatius*, a Disciple of St. *John*, and Glorious Martyr of *Jesus Christ*, tells us, That *he that is not in the Sanctuary is depriv'd of the Bread of* (*a*) *God.* And of a Person that comes not to the *Publick Assemblies*, he says, (*b*) *That he is proud, and hath condemn'd himself. For it is written, God resisteth the Proud*: *Let us therefore not resist the Bishop, that we may be the Subjects of God.*

If you search the Scriptures you will find, that to forsake the *Christian Community*, was in effect to renounce all the Priviledges of it, and openly to disown *Christianity* it self. *They went out from us*, says St. *John*, *but they were*

1 Joh. 2.19.

(*a*) Epist. ad Ephes. p. 20.
(*b*) Ibid.

not

not of us: For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.

St. *Jude* represents such Men under a very ill Character, as being *Mockers*, and *walking after their own Ungodly Lusts*: And says he, *These are they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.* They pretended to greater perfection than others, but their deserting the *Christian Assemblies*, together with a vicious Conversation, discover'd them to be Carnal, and to be govern'd by no higher Principle than that of the Animal Life.

Ver. 18.
Ver. 19.

They that are truly Spiritual, are of another Temper, and as they walk in the Light, so they also think themselves obliged to cause their Light to shine before Men, and to keep up the Face of a *Church*, not only when their Affairs are prosperous, but also in times of difficulty. For then it is, that they are more especially requir'd, *To consider and provoke one another unto Love, and unto good Works; not to forsake the Assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, but to exhort one another; and so much the more as they see the Day approaching.*

Heb. 10. 24, 25.

3. *Schism*

3. *Schism* sometimes proceeds beyond a Separation, and the Persons engaged in it, set up opposite *Churches* and *Officers*, or joyn with them. This is a degree of the Sin much worse than Separation, considering it only as such, without the addition of *Immorality*, *False Doctrine*, or *Apostacy*, which are often mingled with it.

You are not to expect, that I should give you Examples out of Scripture of *Schismatical Churches* drawn from *Churches*, and establish'd under separate Pastors; for I do not find from thence, that *Schism* had made so great a Progress, as to form *Regular Societies*, opposite to the deserted *Churches*. But if the *Universal Church*, according to *Christ's Institution*, be one Body, to set up another Body in opposition to it, or any sound part of it, must needs be very Criminal.

This, we find, some were attempting in the *Apostles* Days, and some Directions that are given by St. *Paul*, are very useful on this occasion. He advises *Titus*, as you have seen, to *reject a Heretick*, or *Sectary*, after one or two Admonitions: And he writes thus to the *Romans*; *I beseech you Brethren, Mark them which cause Divisions and Offences, contrary*

Tit. 3. 10.

Rom 16.17.

contrary to the Doctrine which you have learn'd, and avoid them.

St. *Ignatius*, who was instructed by the *Apostles*, tells the *Philadelphians*, that if any one be a Follower of the *Schismatick*, he shall not inherit the Kingdom of (*a*) God. He also admonishes the Church of *Smyrna*, That *nothing in Church-Matters should be done without the* (*b*) *Bishop*; and declares, That *the* Eucharist *is* then to be *esteem'd Valid, when it is celebrated by the Bishop, or a Person appointed by him.* But *without the* Bishop, he says, *it is not lawful to Baptize, or to keep the Feast of Love*: And he adds a little after, (*c*) That he that doth any thing *in a clandestine manner, without the Bishop's Knowledge*, (*d*) *serves the Devil.*

St. *Cyprian*, who flourish'd in the next Age, and also died a Martyr, as *Ignatius* had done, says, (*e*) That he that *adheres not to his Bishop, is not in the Church*; and that *they flatter themselves in vain, who not being at Peace with the*

(*a*) Pag. 40.
(*b*) Pag. 6.
(*c*) Pag. 7.
(*d*) Λάθρα βαπτίζειν.
(*e*) Epist. 66. p. 168.

Priests

Priests of God, creep about, and think, they may privately communicate with certain Persons, when the Church, which is one Catholick Society, *is not in it self but or divided, but connected every where by the Union of the Bishops.* The same Author says, (a) That one *Altar may not be erected against another; and that a new Priesthood cannot be rais'd. He that gathereth elsewhere, scattereth. Whatsoever is appointed by Humane Fury, that the Order of God may be violated, is impious; it is Adulterous and Sacrilegious.*

4. A yet higher degree of *Schism* is, when they that are engaged in it, constitute Officers without Authority; or take to themselves Pastors that have no Lawful Mission, or Real Ordination. Such Pastors may pretend to *a Commission from God; but having none,* and *seeming to do his publick Work without a Warrant,* in the judgment of *Presbyterian* Writers, (b) They *mock him to serve their own turns*: They *profane the Sacred Function, and make a trifle of the Sin*: They are *Troublers of the People,*

(a) Epist. 43. p. 83.
(b) *See* Langley's *Persecuted Minister*, p. 35. 39.
See Jus Divin. Minist. Angl. p. 83. 87, 90.

and

and *the Subverters of Souls*; they take away the *distinction between the Shepherd and the Flock*, and are *Usurpers of the Broad Seal of Heaven*: They bring all to confusion, and like so many *Phaetons, burn up the Spiritual World, by presuming to govern the Chariot of the Sun.*

According to Dr. *Owen* himself, they that act in the stead of *Christ*, and not by express Patent from him, *are plain* (a) *Impostors*. But he more fully expresses his Thoughts on this Subject in these Words; *All Power and Authority*, (says he) (b) *whether in things Spiritual, or Temporal, which is not either founded in the Law of Nature, or collated by Divine Ordination, is Usurpation and Tyranny; no Man can of himself take either Sword. To invade an Office which includes Power over others, is to disturb all Rights, Natural, Divine and Civil. That such an Authority is included in the Pastoral Office is evident,*

1. *From the Names ascrib'd to them in whom it is vested, as Pastors, Bishops, Elders, Rulers; all of them requiring it.*

(a) See Cawdry's *Appendix to Independ. a great Schism.*
(b) *True Nature of a Gospel Church*, p. 56, 57, 58.

2. *From*

2. *From the Work prescrib'd to them, which is feeding by Rule and Teaching.*

3. *From the Execution of Church-power in Discipline, or the Exercise of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven committed to them.*

4. *From the Commands given for Obedience to them, which Respect Authority.*

5. *From their appointment to be Means and Instruments of exerting the Authority of Christ in the Church, which can be done no other way.* He farther shews, *That the whole Flock, the Ministry it self, the Truths of the Gospel, as to the Preservation of them, are committed to the Pastors of the Church, who must give an account for them. And nothing,* continues he, *can be more wicked and foolish, than for a Man to intrude himself into a Trust, which is not committed to him. They are branded as profligately wicked, who attempt any such things among Men, which cannot be done without Impudent Falsification. And what shall be be esteem'd, who intrudes himself into the highest Trust that any Creature is capable of, in the Name of Christ? Whoever therefore takes upon him the Pastoral Office without a Lawful Outward Call, doth take unto himself*

Self Power and Authority without any Divine Warranty; which interests him in an accountable Trust, no way committed unto him, hath no promise of Assistance in, or Reward for his Work; but engageth in that which is destructive of all Church-Order, and consequently of the very Being of the Church *in self.* These are his words; and you may do well to bear them in mind till a farther occasion.

In the mean time I desire you to consider, how tender the Almighty is of his own Constitutions, and what Punishments he hath inflicted on those, who made Invasions on them. *Uzzah* incurr'd his displeasure for taking hold of the Ark, when he saw it shake, and therefore might seem to be justified by a good intention. But being no Priest (a) or *Levite*, on this account his Action, which otherwise might have been laudable, became sinful in a Person not qualified for it. And however it had some appearance of Necessity, and proceeded from a good End, yet this could not excuse him, but he suffer'd present Death for his Transgression. If he was an Upright Man, as he seems to have been, we need not doubt but that he

2 Sam. 6.

(a) Jos. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. 7. c. 4.

met with Favour and Happiness in another World: But in this, God made him an Example of his Justice and Severity, that he might guard the Discipline of his *Church* from the Assaults of others; and that he might teach Posterity, says (*a*) *Palladius*, to abstain from the like rashness.

Long before this, *Korah* with a high Hand affronted the Divine Authority, and made bitter Invectives against the Government and Officers which were appointed by God himself. It was Envy and Ambition that first push'd this Man into an Action so Impious, and would not afterwards suffer him to retreat. Being guided and mov'd by such restless Furies, he revolted from his Superiors, and he was divided, says the *Chaldee* Paraphrast, (*b*) or he divided himself; that is, he became a Separatist, that he might make himself the Head of a Party, and drew such vast Numbers after him, that *Josephus* (*c*) speaking of their Conspiracy, thus represents it: *We have not known*, says he, *such a Sedition either among* Greeks, *or* Barbarians.

(*a*) Pallad. de Vit. Chrysost. p. 5. Ed. Bigot.
(*b*) מחלוקת, Num. 16. 1.
(*c*) Antiq. Jud. Lib. 4. c. 1. p. 245. Ed. Oxon.

Korah

Korah pretended to have a great concern for the Liberties of the People; and that he might gain the Priesthood to himself, suggested that it was a Grievance to the Nation. But God that knew his Hypocrisie, and the Schismatical and Seditious Temper, both of him and his Confederates, made both of them Monuments of his Indignation. By an early and dreadful Judgment on these Offenders, he confirm'd his own Institution; and he commanded, that broad Plates for the covering of the *Ark*, should be made of their *Censers*, that in succeeding Times others might remember, what these Men suffer'd, and be mindful, that *no Stranger who was not of the Seed of* Aaron, *might come near to offer Incense before the Lord, lest they should be as* Korah *and his Company.* Numb. 16. 40.

It is plain that not only the Leaders of the Faction, but their Followers also, were involv'd in the same Ruine. And this being written for our instruction, it may teach us to avoid such Practices as brought upon them so terrible a Judgment, lest, as some have done even in the Times of the Gospel, we also *Perish in the gain-saying of* Korah. Jude 11.

'Tis true, an end is put to the *Aaronical Priesthood*; but *Christ*, who is the Head of the Church, hath his Representatives on Earth for the Government of it; and to *despise them*, is to *despise him*: To usurp their Authority, is to invade his Prerogative. And if we are not Principals in such Actions against him, but yet support and assist those that are so, we partake with them in grievous Sins. You your selves must needs see, if you will judge impartially, what intolerable Presumption it is, not only to expel the *Stewards of his Houshold*, but to substitute others in their places, and new-model his *Family*. Not only to affront and reject his Ambassadors, but to assign him others, whom he hath not sent: Not only to lay aside his Officers as unfit to Govern, but to appoint him such as have no Commission from him. Such Proceedings manifestly tend to the Destruction of his *Visible Kingdom*, and the Persons guilty of them do in effect declare, That *they will not have him to Reign over them.*

Luk. 10. 16.

Aristotle

Aristotle (*a*) argues, That when the Form of the Government of a City is changed, the City it self ceases to be the same that it was before: And whatever Exceptions this may be liable to, as being affirm'd of a *Secular Community*; it may be truly said of *Ecclesiastical Societies*, That when they have Excluded their *Lawful Pastors*, and advanced others into their places, who have no Right to the *Ministry*, they cannot remain the same under such Alterations. They are no longer the *Churches of Christ*; nor are their Teachers the Ministers of *Christ*. They may deceive Men indeed, by acting under a False Character; but *God will not be mocked*. He will not be impos'd on, by the Boldness and Juggles of his feigned *Stewards*, or by the Pageantry of his pretended *Ambassadors*. It was for such, and their Confederates that he created a *New thing*; causing the Earth to open her Mouth and swallow them up. And however such Instances of his Anger are not Numb. 16. 30.

(*a*) Polit. Lib. 2. c. 2.

repeated; yet this that I have menti. on'd, ought to be a lasting Terrour to those, that without a Lawful Call take to themselves the Honour of Priest. hood, or are Associates in such Profanations.

SECT.

SECT. III.

I AM now come to your Case, and give me leave to tell you, that it very nearly concerns you to enquire.

I. Whether you have not contracted the Guilt of *Schism* in your Separation from the *Church* of *England*.

II. Whether you have not increased this Guilt by setting up *Opposite Churches* and *Officers*, or joyning with them.

III. Whether your Pastors have any just Title to the *Ministry*.

I. It concerns you to enquire, whether you have not contracted the Guilt of *Schism* by your Separation from the *Church of England*. Was your *Communion* with it lately Lawful, and have a-

ny New Terms been added, to make it cease to be so? Or was Conformity then a Duty, and is it now become a Sin? It is not long since we took sweet Counsel together, and walked to the House of God as Friends: With many of you we did partake of the *Lord's Supper*, and thereby solemnly testified, That we were all as One Bread, all Members of the same Body. And hath any just cause been given you of breaking off your selves from it? Are you not Self-condemn'd by such contrary Practices? Or can the Divisions which you have made proceed from that *One Spirit*, whose Unity is to be kept in the *Bond of Peace*? Deal but impartially with your selves in considering what I have offer'd to your Thoughts, and I doubt not but you will be convinced, that you have broken that *Bond*; and that your present Separation is a *Schism*, if ever there was any such thing in the World.

II. You may enquire, whether you have not added to your Sin, by setting up Opposite Churches and Officers, or joyning with them; and whether this hath not more alienated your Minds from those whom you had unjustly forsaken.

saken. This, I suppose, is generally your Case; and from hence it is, that in abundance of Towns in this Kingdom, we hear of an *Old Church*, and a *New Church*; the latter labouring to establish it self on the Ruines of the former. But do you find any such Language, or any such thing in *Scripture*? Have not the *Presbyterians* inform'd you right, That however there were such great Numbers of *Christians* in one City as made up many *Congregations*; yet they were all *One Church*, and are constantly call'd a *Church*, because they were all under *One Government*? What Right can you then have to establish *Independent Congregations*, or to set up one Congregation against another, in the same City? Is not this a plain Breach of the *Apostolical Rule*? And must it not be pernicious to *Christ's Visible Kingdom*? If some part of the *Christians* in a City may shake off the Authority of their Lawful Pastors, and form themselves into an *Independent Body*, under their proper Officers, may not a third Body in like manner be form'd out of that, and out of the third fourth, and so on: And would there be any end of Confusions at this rate? Would such a Practice be tolerable any where?

Or,

Or, would it not be destructive of any Society whatsoever? Deal sincerely now with your *Consciences*, and reflect, I pray you, on what has been said, with the same freedom of thought, as if you had not been at all concern'd in the *Controversie*; and I am persuaded, you will be convinced, that it is not unjustly that you have been charged with a high degree of *Schism*.

III. You may enquire, whether the Pastors you have chosen, have any Lawful Call to the *Ministry*. Some of the *Dissenters*, I know, do not think themselves much concern'd about this; For they tell us, *It is the Duty of every Gifted Man, as such, to exercise his Gifts; that if he has receiv'd Gifts to teach publickly, he must exercise them publickly; and that he himself may be the Judge of his own Gifts.* But says Mr. *Pool*, (a) a Learned *Nonconformist*, *What can be expected, but that this Doctrine should be a* Trojan *Horse, whence the Adversaries of Truth, may break out and destroy the City of God? A* Pandora's *Box, from whence all sorts of mischievous and foul poysoning Opinions may fly out, and that*

(a) *Epistle to the Reader, before his* Quo Warranto.

without

without Remedy? And say the *Assembly of Divines*, (a) This Opinion, *That any who suppose themselves Gifted Men, may Preach the Word and Administer the Sacraments, we judge to be the Highway to all Disorder and Confusion, an Inlet to Errors and Heresies, and a Door open'd for Priests and Jesuits, to broach their* Popish *and* Antichristian *Doctrine.*

There are some, (b) it seems, lately risen up amongst us, that are in expectation of *New Priests* and *Prophets*, who will be alter'd, they say, *by such a Visible appearance of Majesty in their very Countenance, as may be call'd the Writing of the Father's Name upon their Foreheads, as it was with* Moses *when he came from Conversing with God, and with our Blessed Lord himself, when the Clouds of Glory overshadowed him.* And this at present may be thought a harmless Opinion, however there be no foundation for it: But the Patrons of it, we see, can adventure upon *Predictions*, and *New Revelations*, without any such splendor upon them as they describe; and how much farther they may pro-

(a) Epistle to the Reader before Jus Divin. Minist. Evangel.
(b) Philadelphians.

ceed,

ceed, we know not. As for your selves, I suppose, that there are few, if any, of you, that ascribe the Call of your Pastors, or their Distinction from other Men, to a Miracle, but you generally believe, that to constitute them in their Office, some Ordination is necessary, or Expedient at least, whether it be perform'd by a *Bishop*, or by *Presbyters*, or by the *People*: For there are those amongst you, who lay claim to their *Ministry* these several ways.

I. Some of them, I confess, had *Episcopal Ordination*. But since these must have solemnly promis'd, that they would *obey their Ordinary*, I would have you consider, how the Blessing of Heaven can be expected on their Work, as now it is managed, when it is a continual Breach of that Engagement.

Yet if they had made no such Engagement, their Separation from their Bishops to whom they owe Obedience, and from the *Church* to which they ought to be united; their passing beyond their Line, and their drawing Disciples after them, which belong not to them; their gathering *Churches* out of sound *Churches*, and opposite to them; and their administring the *Sacraments*, which

which are the *Bond of Union*, in a dividing way; are things highly *Schismatical*. And however such Men may be eminent for their personal Abilities, yet in their exercise of them, if we may believe St. *Ignatius*, *they serve the* (a) *Devil*.

Before I come to examine other Pretences of your Teachers to the *Ministry*, give me leave to put you in mind, that the *Elders* and *Messengers* of the *Congregational way*, who met at the (b) *Savoy*, confess'd, *That in respect of the publick and open Profession, either of* Presbytery *or* Independency, *this Nation hath been a Stranger to each way, it's possible, ever since it hath been* Christian: And the like they might have said of all other *Christian Nations*. The truth is, neither of those *Sects* were anciently in being, and then we are not like to hear of their *Ordinations*. It is but of late that they appear'd, and therefore we have the more reason to enquire, whether there be any ground for their Establishment, or what Right they have to make such Changes in the *Church*, as they every where attempt.

(a) Ubi Supra.
(b) Anno Dom. 1658.

If

If a Person should now profess, that he was sent to Dethrone all Kings, and to New-model all Governments, he would have no cause to be angry, if we propos'd these Questions to him: *By what Authority dost thou these things? And who gave thee this Authority?* And if Men will be now endeavouring to Depose, or Degrade all Bishops, to abrogate their Office and overthrow their Chairs, and to set up a *Discipline* which was unknown to all the *Churches* upon Earth, they may not be offended, if we desire a sight of their Commission.

Jerem. 1. 10. The Prophet *Jeremiah* was set *over the Nations, and over Kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, to build and to plant:* That is, he was not to make these great Turns of Affairs himself, but only to Prophesy of them; and to do this it was manifest, that he was appointed of God. But some would perswade us, that they may act as great Matters as he was to foretell: That they may destroy that sort of *Government* which hath been transmitted down to us from the Apostles, throughout all succeeding Ages, and was established in all *Christian Nations*; and that they may introduce another that was unknown to Antiquity, and for above a Thousand Years

years after Christ, not receiv'd by any Church in the World. We have therefore reason to demand of them a sight of such *Credentials* as make it plain, that they are sent of God. And since they have been so forward to make Invasions on an Order of Men which hath been in possession of *Ecclesiastical Authority* for above Sixteen Hundred Years, they must pardon us, if we question their own Title to it, or say to them as *Optatus* (*a*) did to the *Donatists*, *Who are ye, and from whence did ye come?*

I have nothing here to do with Foreign *Protestants*, whose Call, they say (*b*) to the *Pastoral Office*, was *Extraordinary*. But my Business at present is with your Teachers, who pretend to no such thing, or, if they do, may be easily refuted. They have taken upon them the *Sacred Function* in a New way, a way that was never approv'd in Ancient times; and

(*a*) Qui estis vos & unde venistis? Optat. Lib. 2.

(*b*) Non nego quin Apostolos postea quoque, vel saltem Evangelistas interdum excitârit Deus, ut nostro tempore factum est. Talibus enim qui Ecclesiam ab Antichristi defectione reducerent, opus fuit. Munus tamen ipsum Extraordinarium appello, quia in Ecclesia ritè constitutis locum non habet. Calvin. Inst. L. 4. c. 3. Sect. 4. Auteurs de sa Reformation ont volontairement renoncé à la marque de l'Eglise Romaine; qu'il faut tenir leur vocation pour Extraordinaire, &c. Bez. Hist. p. 580.

there-

therefore we may demand a sight of the Patent, by which they would justifie their Innovations.

II. Amongst the Innovators, I doubt, we shall find the second sort of your Teachers, which I have mentioned, and these are they who claim a Title to the *Ministry*, as being Ordain'd by *Presbyters*. They would be thought, I know, to be of very Antient Extraction; and for this, quote these Words of St. *Paul* to *Timothy*, *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which is given unto thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the* Presbytery. And this Text of Scripture they take to be so evident on their side, that they urge it frequently, and to comply with their Interpretation of it, they wrest other Passages, which make directly against them. So that on this one place the whole Fabrick of their Cause seems to depend.

1 Tim. 4. 14.

Yet is this place so far from plainly asserting the thing for which they contend, that *Calvin* himself, (a) who was the Father of their Discipline, could find in it no such Matter. For he thought

(a) Instit. Lib. 4. c. 3. Sect. 16.

that

that *Presbytery* here signifies the Office of a Presbyter; and then the meaning would be, that *Timothy* should not neglect, but be careful to exercise that Presbyterial Office, or Power, which was committed to him by Laying on of Hands. So that if the greatest Patron of *Presbytery*, and one that had Sagacity enough to discover what might be advantagious to it, was not mistaken, this Passage of Scripture affords it no support.

Mr. *Selden* (*a*) favours the Interpretation of *Calvin*, and confirms it with Citations from the Story of *Susanna*, from *Josephus*, from *Eusebius*, and from the Council of *Ancyra*. Yet remaining something doubtful of the true meaning of the Word, he censures those, (*b*) who from this single place of the *New Testament*, and that of an *Uncertain Reading and Sense*, form'd such strange Notions of the Jurisdiction of a *Christian Presbytery*, as if it had been then founded on a *Divine Institution*.

(*a*) Selden. de Syned. Lib. 1. c. 14.

(*b*) Ex hoc autem loco Novi Fœderis unico, tum lectionis tum sensus, ut vides, adeo incerti——Mira formantur & varia ab aliquibus de Jurisdictione Presbyterii velut Instituto Divino etiam tunc fundata. ibid.

Nevertheless, let us suppose that by the *Presbytery* we are to understand the Persons that did bear the Office; we are not certain from the Expression it self, who are here intended by it. For it is a Name of Dignity, not always taken in its limited Sense, but sometimes attributed to *Ecclesiastical Officers* of the highest Rank. St. *John* twice calls himself a *Presbyter* in his Epistles; and St. *Peter* assumes the same Title, where he says, *The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder.* And now the Question is, *Whether the Supream, or Inferiour Presbyters, Ordained* Timothy? That is, Whether they did it, who had power to Ordain him; or they, who, as far as we can find, never had any such Authority. And this, I think, admits of an easie Resolution.

Joh. 2. v. 1.
Joh. 3. v. 1.
Pet. 1. v. 1.

We do not find in *Scripture*, that to mere *Presbyters* any such Authority was ever committed; nor are there any Footsteps of it in Antiquity. But if they must be thought to have quitted it presently after the *Apostles Days*, there were never Men that at such a vast distance of place, so Universally, and all on a suddain conspir'd to degrade themselves, and to yield up their Rights tamely,

tamely, without any Complaint. Yet with so much Artifice must they be imagin'd to have betray'd their Trust and cover'd their Shame, that no Discovery was made of it for Fifteen Hundred Years. We hear of no claim of any such Power made by any *Presbyters* before the *Fourth Century*, when *Aerius* and others oppos'd *Episcopacy*: But they were expell'd from the *Churches*, (*a*) and could no where gain an Establishment; nor are they of such a Character as may give Reputation to any Cause.

Yet if mere *Presbyters* might Constitute others of their own Character, it doth not follow that they could Ordain *Timothy*, who was a *Bishop*; and had Jurisdiction over them, as I have shew'd in another place. They could not give what they never had, nor communicate a Power which they had never receiv'd. Thus the *Fathers* argue in the case. And on another occasion, *Salmasius* himself asserts, (*b*) That such reasoning is good concerning the Conveyance of an Authority which is of *Divine Institution*;

(*a*) Vid. Epiphan. Hæres. 75. c. 3.

(*b*) In rebus Divinæ Institutionis nemo potest quod non accepit tradere, nec potestatem quam ipse non habet alii transcribere. Salm. Apparat. p. 232.

on; as that is, which is now in question.

The *Dissenters*, I know, contend, that *Timothy* was not a *Bishop*, but an *Evangelist*; and *Evangelists*, say they, were Extraordinary Officers; they were Companions of the *Apostles*, and of a higher Rank than *Pastors*. But if this be admitted, doth it at all mend the matter? *Who ever saw, or read*, says *Salmasius*, (a) *that they who were to have* Extraordinary *Power, were delegated by those who had no more than* Ordinary? *Can you imagine that mere* Presbyters *can Ordain an* Evangelist, *whose Office was so much Exalted above their own? Can you really believe, when there is no Revelation for it, no Ground for any such thing, that the Private Ministers of a Congregation appointed Collegues for the* Apostles? *Surely it is more probable at least, if it could not otherwise be discover'd, that the* Apostles *made choice of their own* Fellow-Labourers, *to whom, as there was opportunity, they committed the Government of the Churches.*

(a) Quis unquam vidit aut legit eos qui Extraordinariam potestatem habituri sunt, delegari & ordinari ab illis qui Ordinariam habent tantum. Apparat. p. 18.

Yet

Yet to prevent all cavilling as much as possible, let us suppose, what I do not grant, That the Persons in the Text were mere *Presbyters*, it does not prove that others, who at this time assume that Title, have the Power of *Ordaining Presbyters*; and if they attempt it, there is nothing in the Text, that may be for their Vindication. To make this appear,

1. It is to be observ'd, that St. *Paul* himself Ordain'd *Timothy*, and says to him on that occasion, *I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the Gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my Hands.* And if he condescended to call to his assistance some Inferiour Officers for the greater Solemnity of the Action, it does not follow that they could do it of themselves without him; and much less, that they could do it in opposition to him, or any other that should be in the same Station. 2 Tim 1.6.

2. If mere *Presbyters* had the Power of *Ordination*, when they are suppos'd to have confer'd it on *Timothy*, it may well be thought to have been some Personal Priviledge which died with them; for we find no marks of it in succeed-

ing Times. St. *Jerome*, (*a*) who of all the *Fathers*, is the greatest Favourite of the *Presbyterians*, says, *That originally, a Presbyter was the same as a Bishop*; and that at first, *the Churches were govern'd by the Common Council of Priests, till by the Instigation of the Devil, Divisions did arise; and one said, I am of* Paul, *and another said, I am of* Apollos, *or I of* Cephas; *and then it was decreed all over the World,* That *one chosen out of the* Presbytery, *should be placed over the rest, that to him the whole Care of the Church might be committed, and so the Seeds of* Schism *be extirpated.* And if he has truly related the Matter, this Change must have been made when many of the *Apostles* were alive, and transacted by themselves. And we need not doubt, but when the New Prelates were Constituted, they were Distinguish'd from all Inferiour Officers, by the Power of *Ordination*. Certain it is, that afterwards this Power was every where thought peculiar to the *Bishops*; and when they had been in possession of it, much above a Thousand Years, common Equity requires, that we should judge them to have had it by

(*a*) Hieron. in Tit. 1.

Right,

Right, unless the contrary do appear. But there is no Ground to believe that they were Usurpers of it: No probability that they would ingross it to themselves, especially in the early Times, when they were generally such Mighty Instances of Humility and Meekness, of Patience and Self-denial. There is not the least Complaint left us of any such thing; nor is it at all credible, that they should so universally attempt it; or, if they did, that they should have the same success in all the *Churches upon Earth.* It follows, that they who take upon them the Power to *Ordain*, having never receiv'd it from those that were vested with it, do it in the wrong of the *Lawful Possessors*, who alone could convey it; and having no just Title to it, they can no more Constitute a Minister of *Christ*, than they can *make dead Bones live.*

3. The Office which *Timothy* had, was given him *by Prophecy*, 1 Tim. 4. 14. or, *according to the Prophecies that went before of him*, 1 Tim. 1. 8. His *Ordination* therefore, if the way of arguing much us'd amongst *Dissenters* be good, must have been an *Extraordinary* thing, and is not to be drawn into Precedent, except in Parallel Cases. But your Pa-

stors, I suppose, do not pretend, that they were markt out by *Prophecy*, or distinguish'd by a particular *Revelation*, and therefore they cannot here find any defence of their Pretences to the *Ministry*.

4. The *Dissenters*, by affirming that *Timothy* was an *Extraordinary Officer*, and *Evangelist*, cut off all the Succour which they would draw from this place, for the Vindication of their *Ordinations*: For according to their own Opinion, here is no Example of *Presbyters* Constituting a *Presbyter*, or a *Fixed Pastor* of a *Church*; and then certainly there is none to be found in the *Bible*. I know not what they can reply to this, unless they would shift their Principles, and confess, that we have in *Timothy* an Instance of *Episcopal Government*, or *Standing Prelacy*; and if they would advance thus far towards us, I may refer them to what I said before, to prove that his *Ordainers* must have had *Apostolical*, or *Episcopal Authority*.

III. Others claim their Title to the *Ministry*, as being Ordain'd by the People. (a) But what *Divine Precept*, what

(a) See the *Narrative of some Church-Courses in* N.Engl. *by* W.R. c. 12.

Rule

Rule have they for this? What Example have they for it, either *in Scripture*, or *out* of *Scripture*, in any part of the *Catholick Church*? If they have discover'd in it so much as One Pastor of their way for above a Thousand Years after the Days of the Apostles; I would demand, as St. *Austin* (*a*) did in another case, *Out of what Earth did he spring? Out of what Sea did he arise? From which of the Heavens was he dropt?* For my own part, after all the research that I have been able to make, I can find no such Person; not so much as an Instance of One in all Antiquity.

'Tis true, St. *Paul* did foretell, That the *Time would come, when Men would not endure sound Doctrine: But having itching Ears, would heap to themselves Teachers after their own Lusts.* And *Tertullian* (*b*) informs us of some *Hereticks*, who *impos'd on private Persons the Office or peculiar Work of the* Priesthood. But your Ministers, I suppose, will not insist upon such Passages as these for their Vindication; and yet I know no other that can support their Cause. 2 Tim. 4. 3.

(*a*) De qua terra germinavit? De quo mari emersit? De quo cœlo decidit, Contr. Donat. Lib. 3. c. 2.

(*b*) Laicis Sacerdotalia munera injungunt. Præscript. Hæret. c 41. p. 217.

The

The *Assembly* of Divines, who have been the Oracles of the *Presbyterians*, write with great assurance of this Matter. For, say they, (a) *We challenge any Man to shew any one Text in all the New Testament, for the Justification of a Popular Ordination. To what purpose*, add they, *did* Paul *and* Barnabas *go from place to place to Ordain Elders? Why was* Titus *left in* Crete, *to appoint Elders in every City? Might not the People say, What need* Paul *leave* Titus *to do that which we can do our selves? If this Doctrine were true, the Apostles needed only to have Preach'd, and to have Converted the People to the Faith; and when they had done, to have said, We have now done our Work: You may now Elect and Ordain your Officers your selves; the power of these things belongs to you. But the Apostles did quite contrary*, &c. They afterwards complain (b) of a Generation of Men then risen up amongst them, who disclaim'd all Ordination from Ministers, as *Unwarrantable and Antichristian*, and took it up from the People *as the only way of the Gospel*: Whereas, they tell us, *it hath not the*

(a) Jus Divin. Minist. Angl. Part 1. p. 185, 186.
(b) Pag. 187.

least

least footing in the New Testament, nor in Antiquity; but is in effect *a renouncing of the Ordinance of Christ as Antichristian, and of all the Ministers and Churches in the Christian World*: A thing that would engage Men *to be Seekers, and to forsake all Church-Communion, as many*, they say did, *in those Unhappy Days*.

Salmasius, who was on the side of the *Assembly*, and otherwise a Man of Prodigious Learning, declares, (*a*) That *the* People *have power to impose over themselves a King*, which may be true in some cases, *but they had never any to Elect and Ordain* Presbyters *and* Bishops. *Calvin* also affirms, (*b*) That *not the Multitude of Believers, but the* Pastors *only impos'd Hands on their Ministers*. And that they only ought to do so, is so much the common Opinion of the Reform'd, that in the Judgment of *Blondel*, (*c*) that Work was not ascrib'd to Laymen by any *Protestant*.

(*a*) Populus nunquam habuit eligendi & Ordinandi Presbyteros vel Episcopos, quatamen potest Regem super se imponere, & libertatem corporum suorum alicui domino mancipere. Apparat. pag. 232.

(*b*) Non universam multitudinem manus imposuisse suis Ministris, sed solos Pastores. Institut. L. 4. C. 3. Sect. 16.

(*c*) Ordinandi, seu manus imponendi potestatem Protestantium nemo laicis tribuendam putavit. Blondel. Apol. Sect. 3. pag. 523.

Our

Our Separatists, I know, are divide about this Matter: And however the that call themselves the *United Ministers* (a) &c. agree in this, That it is requisite that a Person who is chosen to the Ministerial Office, be *duly Ordained*. They do not declare by whom, or in what manner, he is to be so. Nor could they declare it, but they must have discover'd their Divisions, which with much Art they endeavour'd to conceal. And now that I am upon this Subject, I cannot but take notice, that when the *Heads of their Agreement* were sent from the City into the Country to gather Subscriptions: Amongst other Articles of that Union, it was asserted, that Ordination was to be perform'd with Imposition of Hands; but this was afterwards left out in the Printed Copy, to the great Surprize of many Subscribers that had approv'd it. And leaving you to judge of the Sincerity of the Managers of this Affair, I shall think it no great Digression to make this Remark, That there is amongst the Separatists, a prevailing Party, who would lay aside a Ceremony which is of Divine, or Apostolical Institution, and

(a) *Heads of Agreement*, p. 6, 7.

which

which has been of constant use in all Churches. But whether they reject it as sinful, or whether they are sensible that their Ordainers have no Right to it, or what other Inducement they had to discharge it, I pretend not to determine. I only urge them to prove by any good Authority, that a Congregation may Ordain their own Pastor, either without that Rite, or with it. If they are not able to do this, it may easily be decided, whether they have imitated the *Pattern in the Mount*, which they would be thought to follow with so much exactness; or whether they have not forsaken it in a Matter of the greatest Moment, that they might establish their own Inventions.

I have now enquir'd what Title your Pastors have to the Ministry; whether they pretend to it, as being Ordain'd by Presbyters, or by the People, and can find nothing of Validity in it. If they can demonstrate it to be good, let them produce their strong Reasons for it. But if no just Defence can be made of it; Then, according to the Doctrine of their Brethren, express'd in the last Section. They *mock God, to serve their own turns*: They *profane the Sacred Function, and make a trifle of the Sin*:

They

They are the *Troublers of the People*, and *the Subverters of Souls*: They are *the Impostors* and *Usurpers of the* Broad-way *of Heaven*: They are the *Disturbers of all Right*, and the *Phaeton's that burn up the* Spiritual World: They *Intrude themselves into a Trust*, even the *highest Trust, which was not committed to them*, and therefore are to be reckon'd among those that are *branded as profligate and wicked*, and guilty of *impudent Falsification*.

If this sounds harsh, I hope you will remember that it is the Language of your Brethren: And if your Pastor would make fit Reflections on it, I might hope that they would not esteem me their Enemy for dealing plainly with them, but rather be thankful for my Endeavours to *save them with fear*; and by a faithful representation of their Condition to bring them to Repentance. I doubt many of them are hindred from this by their numerous Followers; and therefore Charity does the more constrain me to warn you, not to be Partakers with them any longer in Dividing the Church; not to assist or encourage them in giving such deep Wounds, as they do, to the Body of Christ.

There

There may be other Cases of Schism which are perplex'd and difficult, but yours is not of that number. For to sum up all,

1. You have forsaken a Church to which, by your own Confession, your Conformity was Lawful. You have abandon'd the whole Episcopal Communion, and thereby in effect you renounced all Right to the Ministry and Sacraments.

2. You have not only deserted those who by your own acknowledgment are Lawful Pastors, but to their great Disturbance, and a farther Breach of Unity, you have brought within their Line, and in opposition to them, other Guides of your own chusing.

3. These, for the most part, are such as had no Episcopal, or Real Ordination. So that you have exceeded the *Novatians*, *Donatists*, and *Meletians*, who had their proper Bishops, and these, upon their Repentance of their Irregularities, were received by the Church into the same Station which they possess'd before in the time of their Separation. But no part of the Ancient Church ever admitted of a Pastor of your way. None ever approv'd your *Presbyterian* and *Popular Ordinations*.

When

When one of the former sort did first appear, it was condemn'd as null and (a) void, by the third Council of (b) *Alexandria.* And the other, till of late, was never heard of in the *Christian* World.

Thus have I laid before you a just Account of your State, as you are divided from us; and to clear it, I have given you the true Character of your Preachers; I mean as they are such, and bear their part in the Schism: It is only on this occasion that I have medled with them, and now exhort you with all earnestness, to *depart from the Tents of those Men, lest ye be consumed in their Sins.*

(a) Vid. Athanas. Apolog. 2. p. 570.
(b) A. D. 324.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

HAVING shew'd what Grounds I have to apprehend that you are deeply engaged in *Schism*, I come now to examine the Arguments that have been offer'd on your part to excuse you from the guilt of it, and I shall set them down in this Method.

I. It has been said, That notwithstanding your present *Separation* from us, yet you are *One* with us, because we both adhere to the same Doctrine.

II. That in the Apostles Days there were Independent and Seperate Churches planted in the same City.

III. That *Jesus Christ* hath declar'd, That *when two or three are gather'd together in his Name, there* He *is in the midst*

midst of them; and that you assemble in this manner, and are therefore assur'd of his favourable Presence.

IV. That *Paul rejoyced that Christ was Preach'd* even by those Men who did it out of *Envy and Strife*; and if the case of your Teachers were as bad as this, you have no reason to be solicitous about their Call, nor we to be offended about their Work.

V. That you are only return'd to those whom you had forsaken before, and that you might do this since you had the Indulgence, or the Liberty granted to you by the Law.

VI. That the use which you make of this Liberty, is not only Lawful, but your Duty: And that having your freedom, you ought to make choice of the way of the *Dissenters*, because you conceive it to be better than that of the *Church*, and to be prefer'd before it; as enjoying purer Ordinances; as affording Communion with a better People; and as most conducing to your Edification.

This

This I think is the Sum of what has been said in your Defence, and whether it may sufficiently clear you from the imputation of *Schism*, is the Subject of our present Enquiry.

I. It hath been said, That *notwithstanding your present Separation from us, yet ye are One with us, because we both adhere to the same Doctrine*: And I know nothing hath been more commonly urged of late in your Vindication. So that we may seem to have gain'd this by your late Conformity, that we are now treated with softer Language than formerly we were. Yet the rude Assaults which before were so frequently made upon the *Conformists* by the Adversaries that call'd them *Babylonish* and *Antichristian*, and thereby expos'd their own Malice or Folly, did less hurt to the Church, than this seeming compliance, which would make Communion with it an indifferent thing, and so dissolve its Government, as I shall shew hereafter.

How far you are at an Agreement with us in Doctrine, I know not. But if the same be taught in your Meetings; that is, published by many of your Party in their Printed Books, and

even in their Catechisms, I think it is liable to great Exceptions. Yet if it were every way Pure and Apostolical, and the very same with that of the *Conformists*, Can this be a reason for your Desertion of them? Or may not the same reason bring you back to them? But I fear it is only to serve a Turn, and to be laid aside on other occasions. If you please to consult your Teachers, and demand of them, Whether you may not return to us? Since, as 'tis thought, your Doctrine is the same with ours, doubtless they would press you to remain where you are: They would thunder against *Schism*, as others have done; and terrifie you with the great Evil of Separation, notwithstanding it lies at their own Door.

I am sure the *Independants*, who made so light of *Schism*, when they were drawing Congregations out of Congregations, did afterwards endeavour to secure to themselves their own Proselites. For they declare, (a) That when *a Person was admitted into any of their Churches, he might not remove from it*

(a) *See* Cotton's *Way of the Churches of* New-England, c. 6. Sect. 3. *See also the Narrative of some Church-courses in* New-England, *by* W. R. c. 8. p. 32.

to

to another Church, without the consent of the former first sought and obtain'd. But if that was deny'd, and yet he would depart, *they would not detain him by violence, nor make their Church a Prison to him.* However they would look on him as a *Heathen* and *Publican:* They would condemn him as a *Breaker of the Everlasting Covenant*, or as one that like *Annanias* and *Saphira*, *lyed against the Holy Ghost.* And in the Heads of Agreement subscrib'd by your Ministers of different Sects, they assert, (a) That *a Visible Professor, joyn'd to a particular Church, ought to continue stedfastly with the said Church, and not forsake the Ministry and Ordinances without an orderly seeking a Recommendation to another Church.* And say they in another place, (b) *We ought not to admit any one to be a Member of our respective Congregations, that hath joyn'd himself to another, without endeavours of mutual satisfaction of the Congregations concern'd.* Here they give you some useful Hints, which may intimate how requisite it is to review their Actions and your own. For this may afford you matter of great Humi-

(a) Pag. 5.
(b) Pag. 11.

liation, and be a means of your Conviction, when you reflect how you did forsake our Churches, without any permission granted by them, or requested of them; and how your Pastors receiv'd you, without giving any satisfaction to those whom ye had deserted.

What your Teachers will say to this, I know not; but it seems they would have you believe, that an Agreement with us in Faith is sufficient, but an Union with them in Worship is necessary. You may forsake us without any Permission, but not depart from them without their Consent. The Liberty they allow you in one case, they take away in another, and reject it as a thing not to be endured, when it touches their own Constitution

But not to insist farther on the Opinions and Practices of these Men, I shall shew you what St. *Cyprian* and St. *Chrysostom*, thought of the pretence for Church-Divisions, which is now under consideration: For they speak as home to it as if they had been directed by a Prophetick Spirit: But the reason is, because the Schismaticks in their Days excus'd themselves in the same manner as some of you have done. And the same Plea being us'd by both,

you

you equally come under the same Confutation.

St. *Cyprian* speaking of the *Novatians*, says, (a) *It could not help them at all that they acknowledge God the* Father, *the* Son *and* Holy Spirit, *as we do: For* Korah, Dathan, *and* Abiram *own'd the same God, the only true God; and as to the Law and Religion, were on equal terms with* Moses *and* Aaron; *yet being unmindful of their place, and transgressing their Bounds, they challenged to themselves the power of Sacrificing; and then by a stroke from Heaven they suffered the punishment due to their unlawful Attempts.* ——— *And that it may be better understood, what the Divine Judgment was against such presumption, we find that not only the Captains and Leaders in Wickedness, but also such as were partakers with them in it, were condemn'd to suffer, if they did not separate themselves from the Society of those Criminals.* ——— *By which Example it appears, that all must be guilty and liable to punishment, who with a profane rashness join themselves with* Schismaticks, *against their* Bishops *and* Priests. *As the* Holy Spirit *testifies by the* Prophet Hosea, saying, (b) *Their* Sacrifices *shall*

(a) Cyprian. Epist. 69. p. 183, 184.
(b) Hos. 9. 4.

be as the Bread of Mourning: All that eat thereof shall be polluted: Hereby teaching us, that all who have been defil'd in Sin *with their Leaders, must be their Companions also in the Sufferings inflicted on them.*

St. *Chrysostome* speaks more fully on this Subject, and discourses of it to this effect: (a) *A certain Holy Man said what seems very bold, and yet he said it; and it is, that even the Blood of Martyrdom cannot wash away this* Sin of Schism. *For tell me, I pray you, wherefore would you suffer Martyrdom? Is it not for the Glory of* Christ? *But if you would lay down your Life for* Christ, *wherefore do ye lay waste the* Church *for which* Christ *died?* Hear what Paul speaks, *I am not meet to be call'd an Apostle, because I persecuted the* Church of God. *But Persecution gives a greater lustre to the* Church, *whereas* Schism *exposes it to shame amongst its Enemies. This I speak to such as indifferently yield up themselves to the conduct of those that divide the* Church—*Know ye not what* Korah, Dathan, *and* Abiram *suffered? Or can ye be ignorant that they also perished that were with them? Wherefore then do you say*

(a) Tom. 3. p. 822, 823. Ed. Savil.

their

their Faith is the same with ours, and they are Orthodox? For if that be so, why are they not with us? If their Affairs succeed well, ours must be in a bad posture; and if ours prosper, theirs must be calamitous——And can you imagine, I pray you, it is sufficient to say, that they are Orthodox, if the Rights of Ordination be wanting or destroy'd? What profit is there of other things, if due care be not taken for This? We ought to contend for it, as we do for the Faith it self. For if it be Lawful for any that will, to fill their own Hands, as the Ancients speak, (a) or to make themselves Priests; in vain was this Altar built, in vain is this full Assembly, and this Company of Sacred Ministers in vain also—— If any one make light of these Matters, let him look to it —— How shall we bear the Derision of the Unbelieving Greeks? If they upbraid us with Heresies, what will they not speak of these things? If, say they, these Men have the same Opinions; if they have the same Mysteries, why does one thus leap into the place of another? Do not ye see, how all the Affairs of the Christians are

(a) Ad LXX Interpretes respicit apud quos τὰς χεῖρας ἐμπλήσειν, πληρόειν vel πλήσειν, est consecrare, Exod. 28. 41, & 29. 9, & 32. 29. Levit. 8. 33, 34. Numb. 3. 3. Vid. Morin. de Ordinat. Part. 2. & Buxtorf. Lex. Chald. in voce מלא.

fill'd

fill'd with Vain-glory? How Ambition and Deceit dwell amongst them? But take away the Multitude from them, and they are nothing. Thus far that Excellent Father, who hath more to the same purpose.

What I shall add, will be farther to prove,

1. That it is most Absurd to affirm, that you are *One with* us, being *divided from* us, as you are.

2. That the Pretence, that Unity of Doctrine is sufficient to make us *all one*, is inconsistent with Church-government, and would be destructive of the Church it self.

3. That it is inconsistent with the Notion of *Schism*, as express'd in the Holy Scripture.

4. That it would take away the Distinction which the Scripture makes between the *Schismaticks*, and those that are Approved.

1. It is most Absurd to affirm, that you are *One with* us, being *Divided from* us, as you are. I have proved, that the Universal Church is a Political Body; and that a Particular Church is so, I think, is generally granted. And

And then if a Company withdraw themselves from it, and shake off all Dependance on it, and Communion with it, they cannot be of the same Body which they deserted; but being Associated together by themselves, they become another. The Empire of *Persia*, was One Body under *Darius*; but it was not so, when it was divided into several Kingdoms under the Successors of *Alexander*. A City is One Body, yet if it sends out Colonies, which afterwards are formed into Cities, living by their own Laws, having full Jurisdiction in themselves, they are no longer the same with the *Metropolis* from which they (a) came. And much less can it be said, that some part of the Citizens shaking off their Obedience to their Governours, and advancing others into their places, are united to those from whom they made the Revolt. Now a Church hath this common with a City, and with all Corporations, that if some of its Members withdraw themselves from it, and make up a Separate Congregation, according to your Model, they are not then of the Community which they have deserted. It is evident, that they

(a) Vid. Grot. de Jure B. & P. Lib. 2. c. 9. Sect. 10.

are

are of a Society which is opposite unto it; and to say that they are *One*, when the contrary is so visible to every Eye, is to renounce the use of Words, and to affront the Common Sense of Mankind.

2. The Pretence that the Unity of Doctrine is sufficient to make us *all One* notwithstanding ye are so *Divided* from us, is inconsistent with Church-Government; and being admitted, would be destructive of the Church it self. Pretences like that, would never be wanting, if they might justifie the Seditious, and it is easie to perceive what sad Effects they would produce. If such as are mutinous in an Army should lay aside their Officers, and put into their places, others of their own chusing, they might say in their own Vindication, That under their present Commanders, they acted according to the same Military Rules as they did before, and therefore 'tis *all One*, which they obey'd. If in a Kingdom, or Common-wealth, some of the Subjects, upon any discontent, should depose their Magistrates, and elect others in their stead out of their own Company, they might make the like defence and say, that they had still the same Laws as before the

Change,

Change, and lived according to the Ancient Customs; only the Administration of Affairs was put into other Hands, which was not material. If in a House some of the Children and Servants should conspire against the Father and Master of the Family, and take into it another Person to be their Governour, they might also plead for themselves, that they receiv'd the same direction for Business as they had before, and that their Work was still the same, and therefore it was *all one* to whom they paid their Submission. But 'tis obvious that such an Army must be put into miserable Confusions, that such a Kingdom would be brought to Desolation, that such a House cannot stand. And 'tis no less manifest, that if the People may forsake their Lawful Pastors, and at their pleasure heap to themselves other Teachers; if some Members of a sound Church may make a causeless Separation from it, and joyn together in opposition it, this would make all Church-Government a precarious and useless thing; it would soon weaken the Church, and push it on to destruction. And it will be a vain Excuse for Men to say, That they are at an Agreement with the Church in Doctrine, when by their

their Divisions they are tearing the Church in pieces.

3. The Pretence that you are free from the Guilt of *Schism*, because you are of the same Faith with the *Conformists*, is inconsistent with the Notion of *Schism*, as it is express'd in the Holy Scripture. It is plain from the Scripture, and it is granted on all Hands, that there was a *Schism* at *Corinth*: But this was not about an Article of Faith, or Matter of Doctrine. What was laid to the Charge of the Dividers here, is, That *every one said, I am of* Paul, *or I of* Apollos, *or I of* Cephas. There is no doubt but all these three did teach the same Doctrine, but the People were Schismatical, and made use of those great Names to give reputation to their several Parties. It may seem strange, that some are censur'd for saying, *They were of Christ*: But I take the meaning to be this; they profess'd themselves to be Followers of Christ, but it was in opposition to his Ministers; as some may pretend to be for the King, when they affront those that are in Authority under him; or they would be for him as the Head of their own Faction. But all these are condemned as Carnal, and as Dividers of Christ. And this may let you

2 Cor. 1. 12.

1 Cor. 3. 3.
1 Cor. 1. 13.

you see, that their Offence was great, notwithstanding the plausible things, that on the account of the Excellent Teachers to which they laid claim, might be said in their defence.

Clement Romanus, a Fellow-labourer with St. *Paul*, makes such use of this Philip. 4. Passage as is very proper for your consideration: For, says he, in an Epistle to the *Corinthians*, (a) *Take into your Hands the Epistle of the Blessed* Paul *the Apostle. What is it that he first wrote to you in the beginning of his Gospel. (b) Of a Truth he spiritually admonish'd you, that there were then Factions among you concerning himself, and* Cephas, *and* Apollos. *But siding, or making a Party in that case, was a less sin; for your Inclinations were towards Apostles of known Sanctity, and a Man approved of them. But now consider who they are that perverted, and diminished the Venerable Esteem of your* Brotherly Love, *which was commended every where. Shameful, Brethren, very shameful is the Report, and unworthy of the Christian Conversation, that the most firm and ancient Church of* Corinth, *for the sake of one or two Per-*

(a) Cap. 47.
(b) See Rom. 2. 16.

sons,

sons, should be seditious against their Priests. *And the Fame of this is not only come amongst us, but amongst those that are otherwise affected. So that because of your Madness the Lord's Name is blasphemed, and great danger is created to your selves.*

4. The Pretence that you are free from the guilt of *Schism*, because you are of the same Faith with the *Conformists*, takes away the distinction of the *Schismatick* from the *Approved*; as will appear by considering the Case of both, as it is represented in the Holy Scripture.

1. It is evident from Scripture, that the Approved, who are the Beloved of God, add this to the practice of other Duties, that they live in Conformity to the Church, and are of a Regular Behaviour in it. *There must be Heresies amongst you*, says the Apostle, *that they which are Approved may be made manifest among you.* That is, as I noted before, as long as Mens Minds are deprav'd there will be Divisions, as there were at *Corinth*, about Matters of Discipline; and the Almighty permits this for the Tryal of his Servants, that by the avoiding those things their Sincerity may be

1 Cor. 11. 19.

be known; that having this mark of Distinction upon them, it might appear to all with whom they were conversant, that they were of the Number of the Faithful.

2. From hence it is plain, that the Dividers and Disturbers of the Church, however they agree with it in Doctrine, are not to be reckon'd amongst the *Approved*. But it will yet be plainer, if they proceed to a Separation from those that are so. These Words of St. *John*, which I also cited before, are remarkable and pertinent to our purpose: *They went out from us*, says he, *but they were not of us: For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: But they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.* But had they been of the Opinion of your Advocates, they might have reply'd: 'Our Desertion can never make it manifest that we were not of you. Indeed 'we went out from you, and did forsake your Assemblies; but notwithstanding this, we may be *all one* with 'you. But we do not find that they had the confidence to make such an Apology.

1 John 11.19.

II. It has been said, that in the Apostles Days there were Independent and Separate Churches planted in the same City. And for this the Testimony of a very Learned *Conformist* (*a*) has been cited by some, who at other times express little regard for it. And it is true, he tells us, that as St. *Peter* was the Apostle of the Circumcision, and St. *Paul* of the *Gentiles*, so *whensoever these two great Apostles came to the same City, the one constantly applied himself to the* Jews, *received Disciples of such, form'd them into a Church, left them, when he departed that Region, to be govern'd by some* Bishop *of his own Assignation; and the other in like manner did the same to the* Gentiles. To prove this he urges from Ancient Writers, 'That the Church of '*Antioch* was founded and instructed by 'St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, and consequent-'ly that the *Jewish* part of it was Con-'verted and Rul'd by one, and the *Gen-'tile* by the other: That the Decrees of 'the Council at *Jerusalem* were peculi-'arly sent, and inscrib'd, *To the* Brethren '*at* Antioch, *&c.—Those of the* Gentiles, 'that is separately from the *Jewish*

(*a*) Dr. *Hammond.*

'Church

'Church in that City, *&c.* That it appears from the Apostolical Constitutions that *Euodius*, and *Ignatius*, at the same time sate Bishops of *Antioch*; the one succeeding St. *Peter*, the other St. *Paul*, one in the *Jewish*, the other in the *Gentile* Congregation: That the Separation continued till both Parties were joyn'd, and united together under *Ignatius*: That from hence it is, that by *Origen* and *Eusebius*, he is called the Second, and by St. *Jerome* the Third Bishop of *Antioch*; and yet he is as truly said by *Athanasius*, to be constituted Bishop after the Apostles: That at *Rome* the two Apostles met again, and each of them there erected and managed a Church, St. *Peter* of the *Jews*, and St. *Paul* of the *Gentiles*: That as *Linus* and *Clemens* were Deacons, the one of St. *Paul*, and the other of St. *Peter*; so both afterwards succeeded them in the Episcopal Chair, *Linus* being constituted Bishop of the *Gentiles*, *Clemens* the *Jewish Christians* there: And that from hence unquestionably grows that variety and difference observ'd amongst Writers, some making St. *Peter*, others St. *Paul*, the Founder of that Church, but others both of them: Some making *Clemens*,

'others *Linus*, the first Bishop after the 'Apostles; both Affirmers speaking the 'truth, with this *Scholion* to interpret 'them: *Linus* was the first Bishop of 'the *Gentile Christians* after St. *Paul*; '*Clemens* the first of the *Jewish* after 'St. *Peter*. This is the Sum of the most material things that he has said on this Subject; but it seems all too infirm to support his Opinion; which yet out of the respect that is due to the Authority of so great a Man, I shall not reject without giving the Reasons of my Dissent from him. And they are these that follow.

I. However the Work of the Apostles was so distributed by consent that the care of the *Jews* was especially committed to St. *Peter*, and that of the *Gentiles* to St. *Paul*; yet they were not limited to either. For,

1. St. *Peter* being sent for by *Cornelius* a *Gentile*, instructed him and those that were come together at his House, in the *Christian Faith*; and when they had received it, he *commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the* Lord: And after this he declar'd in the Council of *Jerusalem*, That God had chosen him for this *purpose*, *that the* Gentiles, *by his*

Acts 10. 34.

Acts 15. 7.

his Mouth, should hear the Gospel, and believe.

2. St. *Paul* Preach'd in the Synagogues of the *Jews* at *Salamis* and *Antioch*: And at *Corinth* he *reason'd in the Synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both* Jews *and* Greeks. At *Rome* also he *expounded and testified to the* Jews, *the Kingdom of* God, *persuading them out of the* Law of Moses, *and out of the* Prophets, *from Morning till Night, and some believed the things that were spoken, tho' some believed not.* Now as it cannot be thought that when he had converted Jews and *Gentiles* together, he divided them into Separate Congregations, so neither is it probable that when St. *Peter* and he were in the same City, Matters were so nicely managed between them, that the One pickt out the *Jews*, as belonging to his Province, and gather'd them into a Church by themselves, and that the Other did the like for the *Gentiles*. No such thing, I am sure can be gather'd from the Scripture.

Acts 13.5, 14.

Acts 18.4.

Acts 28.23, 24.

II. Both these Apostles might be Founders of the Church of *Antioch*, as also of that of *Rome*, and yet neither of these Churches be divided into separate Societies. *Rome* it self had two Founders, and yet it was but one City. And

manifest it is by many other Examples, that different Persons acting as one, may constitute a Corporation, either Ecclesiastical or Civil, which is United in all its parts.

Acts 15. 23. III. The Inscription of the Epistle *to the Brethren of the* Gentiles *that were at* Antioch, *&c.* does only suppose them to have been chiefly concern'd in the Contents of it, and not that they were of a Church distinct from the *Jewish Christians.* It may rather seem, if they had been so, that the Zealots *who came* Acts 15. 1. *from* Judea, would not have press'd them to be Circumcis'd after the manner of *Moses*, but left them to enjoy their own way, as a Separate Body. But the Council having decided the Matter in Debate between them, remov'd from both sides all pretences of Division.

IV. The Writer of the *Apostolick Constitutions* no where affirms, that *Euodius* and *Ignatius* sate at the same time Bishops of *Antioch.* He only introduces *Peter*, saying, that one of them was *Ordain'd* by him, and the other by (*a*) *Paul*, which might be afterwards at a great distance of time. *Malata* informs (*b*) us,

(*a*) Constitut. Apostolic. L. 7. c. 46. p. 372.
(*b*) Malat. Chronograph. p. 325.

that

that after the Death of *Euodius*, *Peter* being then at *Antioch*, *Ignatius* receiv'd the Episcopal Dignity; and if this be so, it may help to put an end to the Dispute about the Order in which he was advanced to that Office.

V. That *Linus* and *Clemens* were at the same time Bishops of *Rome*, hath no better ground than the Testimony of *Ruffinus*, which signifies but little when oppos'd, as it is in this case, by the whole Stream of Antiquity. There are indeed Differences amongst the Fathers concerning the Line of Succession in that See; but they are accounted for by an Excellent (*a*) Hand: And if they were not, nor would admit of any Reconciliation, they would be too weak a Foundation for the Establishment of Separate Churches under their proper Pastors (*b*) in the same City.

Yet do I not reject this Opinion, merely because it hath no good Foundation: I shall produce such Arguments against it, as being duly consider'd may help to determine this Controversie.

(*a*) Vid. D. Pearson. Cestriens. Episcop. Opp. Posthum. Chron. Dissert. Poster.

(*b*) See Treatise of Church Government, c. 9, 11, 14.

1. My first Argument is taken from the Design of Christ; for that was, to Unite both *Jews* and *Gentiles* in *one Body*, and to make *of the Two, one New Man*. And accordingly, he made of Both One People; prescrib'd to them the same Law, and confer'd on them Equal Privileges. It is not therefore to be imagin'd, that the *Jewish* Converts were to be drawn out from amongst the Believers of the *Gentiles*, and gather'd into Churches apart by themselves; Churches that excluded all *Christians* from their Communion, who submitted not to the Law of *Moses*. For this had been to *Divide* those whom our Lord had made One, and to revive the Enmity which he had *slain*: It had been to treat those as *Forreigners*, whom he would have to be *Fellow-Citizens*, and to expel them as *Aliens*, who are his Domesticks, and of *the Houshold of Faith*: It had been to cast those out as *Ismaelites*, whom he had call'd to be Heirs *of* Promise, and to rebuild the *Wall of* Partition, which he had *broken down*.

See Ephes. 2. 14, 15, &c.

2. According to the Mind of *Christ*, St. *Paul* labour'd to restore Peace and Conformity between the *Judaizers* and other *Christians*, that they might live together

together as Members, one of another. And to this purpose, when some believed that they *might eat all things*, and others *being Weak did eat Herbs*; he shews that this difference should be no cause of a Breach of Communion amongst them. For, says he to the *Strong*, who were apt to despise others, *Him that is weak in Faith receive to you*, Rom. 14. 1. That is, notwithstanding the Scruples of such a Person about Meats and Drinks, and other things of that nature, admit him into the Congregation as a Brother. He is not fit indeed to hear *doubtful Disputations*, or to be engaged in them, but he ought to joyn with you in the Publick Worship. The Apostle himself leads us to this Interpretation in the following Chapter, where having put up his Request for those that Dissented about the *Mosaical* Rites, that they might *with one Mind, and one Mouth, glorifie God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*; he presently addresses his Discourse to them, and says, *Wherefore receive ye one another?* For what end was it that they must receive one another? He himself has given a sufficient intimation of it. It was that they might *glorifie God with one Mind, and with one Mouth.* The

thing

thing then requir'd of them was, that both the Weak and Strong, both the *Jewish* and *Gentile* Converts, should meet together in the same Assemblies, and unanimously joyn in the same Prayers and Praises, as if they had been Animated by one Soul.

3. However the Apostle us'd great Tenderness towards the Dissenting Parties, whether they understood their *Christian* Liberty, and did eat things forbidden by the *Mosaical Law*, or whether they did not: Yet when the Judaizers withdrew themselves from the Communion of those that would not come up to their Rigours, and labour'd to seduce as many as they could into the way of Separation; he then treated them in another Style. He represented them as Persons that *corrupted the Gospel*, and pronounced an *Anathema* against them. Speaking of them to the *Philippians*, he says, *Beware of those Dogs; beware of Evil-workers; beware of the Concision*; that is, of those that cut the Church in pieces. And to the *Romans* he says, I *beseech you* Brethren, *mark them which cause Divisions and Offences contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learn'd, and avoid them.* So far was this Apostle from approving

Galat. 1. 7,8.

Philip. 3. 2.

Rom. 16. 17.

preting or allowing of their Separate Congregations.

14. We may gain farther Light into this Matter, and what I have said of it, may be confirm'd from a Remarkable Transaction, which the same Apostle relates in these words; *When* Peter, says he, *was come to* Antioch, *I withstood him to the Face, because he was to be blam'd: For before certain came from* James, *he did eat with the* Gentiles; *but when they were come, he withdrew, and Separated himself, fearing them which were of the Circumcision. And the other* Jews *dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that* Barnabas *also was carried away with their Dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the Truth of the Gospel, I said unto* Peter *before them all, If thou, being a* Jew, *livest after the manner of the* Gentiles, *and not as do the* Jews, *why compellest thou the* Gentiles *to live as do the* Jews? From hence it is plain. Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13, 14.

1. That *Peter* liv'd at *Antioch* after the manner of the *Believing Gentiles*; using the same Christian Liberty as they did; and not withdrawing himself from them, before the *Judaizers* came thither from *Jerusalem*.

2. When

2. When he struck in with the *Judaizers*, it is not to be imagin'd, that they had alter'd his Judgment, or that he had received any new Illumination to direct him; but the Change he shew'd, proceeded from his Fear; a Fear, as we may well suppose, that if he yielded not to those Obstinate Men, they would renounce the *Christian Faith*.

3. The *Jewish* Converts at *Antioch*, were not of a distinct Church by themselves, separate from the *Gentiles*. Certainly they were not so before the coming of the Zealots, with whom they comply'd, not out of Conscience, but *Dissimulation*.

4. With their *Dissimulation Barnabas* was carried away; and this intimates, that his Concurrence with the Dividers, was a new thing to him, or a departure from his former practice. Upon the whole, he and the rest, whom he follow'd in this Action, may seem to have had a good intention, which was not to provoke those of the Circumcision; but to do what they were able to preserve them from Apostacy. Yet in their Conduct there was more of the Policy of the World, than of true Christian Wisdom and Sincerity. Wherefore

St.

St. *Paul*, seeing that they *walked not uprightly, according to the Truth of the Gospel, withstood* Peter *to the Face, because he was to be blam'd*, and reprov'd him *before all*, that they might see their Error, who had been drawn into it by his Example. And if *Paul* was so much against *Separation*, when St. *Peter* himself was at the Head of it, and when *Barnabas*, an Apostle also, together with the Multitude, was engaged in it; if he oppos'd it when it came with so strong a Torrent, doubtless he resisted it with like Courage wherever he met it, in any part of the World.

5. The *Jewish* and *Gentile Christians*, together at *Antioch*, are stiled a Church, and so are they that resided at *Rome*. But to call them so, if in the same City they had been divided into several Independent Congregations, is not agreeable to the Language of that Age. Nor could they with any propriety of Speech be mention'd as one Society, or Body, if they were separate, and had no Communion with one another.

Acts 13. 1.

Clem. Rom. Epist. ad Corinth. c. 1.

6. In the time when this Division is suppos'd to have been between the *Jewish* and *Gentile* Converts, single Persons successively govern'd the Church of

of (a) *Antioch*; and the like may be said of that of *Rome*; as the Fathers inform (b) us, who liv'd near that Age. And it is well known, that (c) *Cyprian*, (d) *Cornelius*, and Others did much insist upon this, that of One Church, or Diocese, there could be but One Bishop; and we need not doubt but the *Novatians*, against whom they argued, would have reply'd, That according to Apostolical Institution, the *Christians* living in One City, might have several Bishops over them, had this been then believ'd. But what was the sense of this Matter on both sides, may be gathered from the *Roman* Confessors, who had been for both, but repenting of the *Schism*, profess'd that they could not charge themselves with the Ignorance of this, (e) *That as there is One God, One Christ, One Holy Spirit, so there ought to be but One Bishop of a Catholick Church.*

III. It hath been said, That *Jesus Christ* hath declar'd, That *when two or*

(a) Vid. Origen. in Luc. c. 1. Homil. 6. Euseb. H. E. L. 3. c. 22.
(b) Iren. advers. Hæres. L. 3. c. 3. Tertull. Præscript. c. 32.
(c) Vid. Cyprian. Ep. 46. & 55.
(d) Cornel. apud Euseb. H. E. L. 6. c. 43.
(e) Vid. Cornel. Ep. ad Cyprian. inter Ep. Cypr. p. 49. p. 93.

three

three are gathered together in his Name, he is in the midst of them; and that you Assemble in this manner, and are therefore assur'd of his favourable Presence. But to this I need return no other Answer, but what was given by St. Cyprian to the *Novations* (a) who objected the same thing. Matt. 18. 20.

These Corrupters of the Gospel, and false Interpreters, says *Cyprian*, *only lay hold on the end of a Discourse, and omit what went before. Part they remember, and part they craftily conceal. As they are cut off from the Church, so they would cut in pieces a passage of Scripture.* They forget, that *when our Lord would persuade his own Disciples to Unanimity and Peace; He said to them*, If two of you shall agree on Earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven—And this *he spake concerning his Church; and to those that are in the Church he says, That if they are of one Heart, if according to his Command and Admonition, but two or three of them are gathered together, and pray unanimously, they may obtain what they ask of the Divine Majesty. Where two or three*, says Matt. 18. 19.

(a) Cyprian. de Unit. Eccles. p. 112, 113.

he,

he, *are gathered together in my Name, I am with them: That is, with the Sincere and Peaceable, with those that fear God, and keep his Precepts*—So that *he that founded and made the Church, doth not divide Men from it; but upbraiding the Perfidious with their Discord, and commending Peace to the Faithful, he shews that he is rather with two or three that pray in concord, than with the many that are at strife*———But *what Peace do they promise themselves, who are Enemies of the Brethren? What Sacrifices do they believe, they offer, when they contend with the Priests? Can they imagine that Christ is with them, when they are Assembled out of his Church?* No, *tho' such Men were slain confessing his Name, the blemish of* Schism *would not be wash'd off with their* Blood.

IV. It hath been said, *That* Paul *rejoyced that Christ was Preach'd, even by those Men who did it out of Envy and Strife, and if the case of your Teachers were as bad as this, as long as they preach Christ, you have no reason to be solicitous about their Call, nor we to be offended at their Work.* But to this I reply;

Philip. 1. 15, 18.

1. That

1. That it does not appear that they who preach'd Christ out of Envy and Strife, did take on them the Work of the Ministry without a Call to that Office. And if they were lawfully admitted into it, it only proves that Ill Men may be so, and yet be useful to others; but not that any may usurp the Sacred Function; and how far this concerns your Teachers and their Followers, I have shew'd before.

2. Neither doth it appear that they Preach'd Christ to any other than the Infidels; and this can never justifie your Pastors for gathering Disciples out of sound Churches; or your selves for breaking the *Bond of Peace*, in compliance with them. It is one thing to add Members to a Church, taken out of the Unbelieving World, and for Members to withdraw themselves from it, and joyn together in an Opposite Society.

3. What the Apostle rejoyced at was the good that his Envyers did, *beside their intention*: The Benefit that did spring from the Evil they design'd, and not the Evil that set them on Work. So that notwithstanding this Example, Envy and Strife are as hateful as ever, and

so are Church-Divisions, and all things else condemn'd in the Gospel.

4. What they acted out of Envy and Strife, did no hurt to any but themselves. 'Tis true, they were guilty of great Inhumanity and Cruelty towards St. Paul, yet their Malice had no ill effect on him, but rested on their own Heads. How it was that they suppos'd that they should *add Affliction to his Bonds*, is not so clear, but that it hath given occasion to several Conjectures. But to me it seems most probable that they emulated the Glory which he had acquir'd by many Conversions; and judging of him by themselves, they imagin'd, it would be a grievous thing to him to hear, that they shar'd with him in that Honour, the Faith being propagated by their Diligence. Whereas it was great satisfaction to him, that when he was under Confinement, they carried on the Work in which he himself should have been employ'd, had he been at liberty. Indeed their manner of doing it did exercise his Patience and Self-denial, yet even that was for his Advantage; and he was assur'd that their Preaching would turn to his Salvation. And as it was beneficial to him, so it was also to the Church, as being a means

Ver. 19.

of

of gaining Proselytes, and both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as an Instrument of their Conversion. But on the contrary, Church-Divisions are prejudicial to all sorts of Persons; to the Pastors of the Church, and to the Flock: To those that are within the Church, and to those that are without. This I might fully prove, but I refer it to a more proper place, and shall only here set down the Words of the Lord Chancellor *Bacon*, who says in his Essays, (a) That *Heresies and Schisms are of all others the greatest Scandals; yea, more than Corruption of Manners. For as in the Natural* Body, *a Wound, or Solution of Continuity, is worse than a corrupt Humour, so in the Spiritual. So that nothing doth so much keep Men out of the Church, and drive Men out of the Church, as breach of Unity.*

V. It hath been said, That *you are only return'd to those whom you had forsaken before; and that you might do this, since you had the Indulgence, or the Liberty granted to you by the Law.* But if your *Separation* was sinful before you *Conform'd*, your Return to it must be so too: For the Law hath not alter'd the

(a) Bacon's Ess. N. 9.

Case, nor done any thing that can make it innocent.

1. We are therefore to enquire in the first place, whether your *Separation* before you *Conform'd*, was not Sinful; and this may easily be resolv'd, for it is clear from what went before, that it was causeless, and consequently *Schismatical*. Perhaps it may be objected, That many of you had never been Members of the Church of *England*, and therefore could not be Deserters of it. But to this I reply, That if you only joyn'd with the Society that made the Revolt from it, you were Partakers in the Offence. They that went before you were as a corrupt Fountain, and you in the Streams that issued from it; and the same malignant Quality hath tainted both.

The *Conformists* in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, might say of the *Brownists*, or your first *Separatists*, as St. *Cyprian* (a) did of the *Novatians*, *We departed not from them, but they departed from us.* And to you that by Education were brought into the Community of those that Divided the Church, we may say

(a) Cyprian. de Unit. p. 112.

as *Optatus* did to the *Donatists*, (a) *Your Ancestors committed that Crime, and you labour to walk in their wicked Steps; that what your Predecessors had done in the matter of* Schism, *you may appear long since to have acted, and still to act. They in their Days did break the Peace, and you do now banish Unity. To your Parents and your selves these Words may fitly be applied.* If the Blind lead the Blind, they both fall into the Ditch. Matt. 15. 14.

When *Manasses*, the Brother of *Jaddus*, withdrew himself from *Jerusalem*, and officiated as High-priest in the Temple at *Garizin*, which was Built for him by *Sanballet*; both he and they of his own Nation that concur'd with him, acted what was highly criminal. But the Matter did not rest here; for their Posterity grievously offended in keeping up the Defection which their Predecessors had begun; and their Cause was condemn'd upon a fair Tryal before *Ptolemaus* (b) *Philometer*. And thus not only they that are first in a *Schism*, but their Followers, and such as come into it in succeeding times, contract the guilt of it. The new Members that are ad-

(a) Optat. L. 1. P. 22, 23.
(b) Vid. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. Lib. 3. c. 7. p. 434.

ded to the former Schismaticks, are, together with them, of One Body; as they that from time to time are added to the Church, are of another.

One thing on which the Dispute between the Advocates for the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and for that at *Garizim*, did mainly turn, was the Question, on which side was the Ancient Succession of Priests? but this was easily determin'd for the former. And now if the whole Issue of the Controversie between the *Conformists* and *Dissenters* were put upon this; Whether of them have the best Title to a Succession of Lawful Pastors, it would not be difficult to decide it; For you grant, I suppose, and it is otherwise evident, that such a Succession is continued with us: But it appears from what has been said, that in your way of Separation, you neither had, nor can have any such thing. Indeed many of the Separatists had Episcopal Ordination, but some of them renounced it; and, as in Mockery, *Ordain'd one another*: Others made no such Abdication as the former; yet withdrawing themselves from their Bishops, they exercis'd their Office in such a manner as is directly against their own Solemn Promise, and Sacramental Engagement.

But

But none of them had power to constitute other *Presbyters*, or in the Language of (a) *Epiphanius*, to give *Fathers to the Church*. As for the rest of your Teachers, they are meer Laymen, and act under a false Character in Matters of the highest importance to the Souls of Men. So that you could be Followers of none of the Dissenting Guides, without *Schism*, and a breach of Obedience where it was due; but with some of them you could not Communicate without bearing a part in their Impostures.

2. If your former Separation was Sinful, your Return to it must be Sinful also. It must be so in a higher degree, because a Relapse into Sin after Reformation, is a greater Offence than the first Commission of it. It had been better therefore that you had not known the way of Peace, than after you had experience of it, to forsake it: Better that you had not come into the Unity of the Church, than to break it again. You are now become more inexcusable than you were before, and thus far your *latter end is worse than your beginning*.

(a) Hæres. 75. N. 4.

3. If your Separation was otherwise Sinful, the Law hath not alter'd their Case, or done any thing that can make it Innocent. I need say nothing of the Toleration which was granted to you by the Dispensing Power, and drew you into the Snare: For I suppose you ground your present Liberty on the Act of Parliament. But if you come not within the Intent of that Act, it leaves you where it found you; and can afford nothing for your Justification. The Act itself will best satisfie you of this, and upon perusal of it you will find, that it was only design'd to give ease to *Tender Consciences*; but yours are not of that Number. Indeed we cannot penetrate into your Hearts; but Charity obliges us to believe, that you did not come to our Churches with Doubts and Fears upon you, that your Conformity was unlawful, but were generally well assur'd, that it was consistent with your Duty, and agreeable to the Holy Scriptures. But this is the very thing which cuts you off from the Indulgence which you claim by the Law; That being design'd only for Persons of another Character.

But what hath the Law done for the Scrupulous? Hath it approv'd their several

venal ways, or set them all in the right? That cannot be; for they are inconsistent and contradict one another. It only tolerates them; and we may tolerate Pain and Sickness and other Evils, from which we have a great aversion. But they remain Evils still; and so must *Church-Divisions* under any Dispensation whatsoever.

The Law says this for the Scrupulous, that upon the Conditions to be performed by them, they shall not be liable to any *Pains, Penalties, or Forfeitures laid on them by some* former Acts; nor shall they be *Prosecuted in any Ecclesiastical Court for their Nonconforming to the Church of* England. But this can never justifie their Nonconformity: For if the Punishments against profaning the *Lord's Day*, and common Swearing, and other things of that Nature, were taken off, they would still be criminal as they were before; and the like may be said of *Schism*. As long as it is condemn'd in Scripture, no humane *Allowance* or *Permission*, can make it Lawful.

If *Heresie* and *Schism* were enjoyn'd by a Law, which is more than an *Allowance* or *Toleration* of them, they would not be freed from their Malignity, or cease to be Sinful. But to the

Impo-

Imposers of things so contrary to Divine Revelation and Institution, we should have reason to say, *Whether it be right in the Sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.*

I am far from derogating from the Authority of Secular Princes, but I am sure I do them no wrong in asserting, That they cannot make *Schism* to be *Ecclesiastical Union*, or *Union to be Schism*, or either of them to be a thing indifferent. They cannot make Falshood to be Truth, or Truth Falshood, but each of these must remain the same that it was, be their Edicts for it, or against it. They may not *call evil good, and good evil: They may not put darkness for light, and light for darkness.*

Isa. 5. 20.

VI. It hath been said, That *the use which you make of the Liberty which is now granted, is not only lawful, but your Duty: And that having your freedom, you ought to make choice of the way of the Dissenters, because you conceive it to be better than that of the Church, and to be prefer'd before it.* But the Foundation of this is already remov'd, for I have prov'd that the Law hath granted you no such Immunities as you imagine; and notwithstanding you are now possess'd of

of them, yet is your *Separation* sinful, as it was before. It ought not therefore to be matter of your choice upon the prospect of any Advantages whatsoever.

We ought indeed to desire and seek after the most excellent things, but we must do it in a suitable way. What we are infinitely to value above other things, is the Favour of God: But we may *not speak wickedly for God, nor talk deceitfully for him.* We may *not do evil that good may come.* Nor may any real good be expected from evil, which can bring forth no such Fruit. In such cases the End cannot sanctifie the Means, but the Means would pollute the whole Action, and not only frustrate our hopes, but bring on us a just Condemnation.

Job 13. 7.
Rom. 3. 8.

I come now to the Reasons mention'd before, which some have given for preferring the way of the *Separation*, before that of the *Church*. They tell us,

I. That you enjoy it in purer Ordinances.

II. That

II. That it affords you Communion with a better People.

III. That it most conduces to your Edification.

All which Pretences are cut off by the sinfulness of the *Separation* it self, to which those Priviledges are ascrib'd, and therefore I might dismiss them without farther consideration. But so much is built upon them, that I thought fit to bring them under a distinct Examination.

I. It hath been said, That *in the way of Separation you enjoy purer Ordinances*: *Ordinances* that are freer from Ceremony, and the addition of things not commanded; that set you at a greater distance from *Popery*, and are therefore the more to be esteem'd. But the weakness of this way of arguing, will appear, if you reflect on the Absurdities which they fall into, who would exclude from Religion all things *not commanded*, and make the greatest distance from the *Church of* Rome, the *Standard* of the best *Reformation*.

These

These Men tell us, (a) 'That the 'Churches built before the Reformation, ought to be level'd with the 'Ground, as Monuments of Idolatry: 'That they can never be purged till they 'are laid in heaps, as their younger Sisters the *Abbacies* were: That they are 'Idol-Temples, nay Idols themselves; 'Execrable things to be demolish'd, or 'avoided: Unclean things not to be 'touch'd: The Mark of the Beast not 'to be receiv'd: That the Bells are to 'be broken as *Popish* Reliques, and to 'be detestedas Abominable Idols which 'the Law of God devotes to Destruction: That Catechisms were to be rejected as Apocryphal things; and that 'Psalms in Meter were to be rank'd 'with pleasant Ballads, and that being 'sung out of a Book, either in Verse or 'Prose, they are Idolatry: That Books 'and Writings are of the Nature of 'Pictures and Images, and that therefore the Holy Scriptures are not to be 'retain'd before the Eyes in the time of 'Spiritual Worship: That Book-Prayer 'in that Worship is Man's Invention, 'and a breach of the Second Command-

(a) See *Baxter's* Dissuasive, C. 1. & 2. *Paget's* Arrow against Separation, p. 28, &c.

'ment;

'ment; and that Prayer-books, and 'stinted Prayers are indeed Idols: That 'to look on the Book in the time of 'Singing and Preaching is Idolatrous; 'and that if our *Litany* were the best 'that ever was devis'd by Mortal Man, 'yet being brought into the Church, 'yea, even into a private House, and 'read out of a Book, it would be as an 'Abominable Sacrifice in the Sight of 'God, and even as a dead Dog: That 'they that use the Lord's Prayer at the 'close of their own, are gross Idola'ters; and that they that Uncover their 'Heads at the Lord's Supper, are Idola'ters also, and joyn their own Posts and 'Thresholds with the Lord's: And 'lastly, that Idolaters are to be put to 'Death according to the Judicial Law 'of *Moses*; which, they say, still binds 'all the Nations of the World: So that 'the greatest Potentates on Earth can'not dispense with it; but ought to ex'ecute the Will of God according to 'his Word.

These are some of the Assertions of the more *Rigid Separatists*, which I have not produc'd with an intent to reproach you, who, I believe, abhor them; but only to let you see, that as those *Sectaries* were deluded by this

False

False Principle, that whatsoever in the Worship of God is not commanded by himself, especially if it has been abus'd by the *Papists*, is sinful and execrable; so you are in danger of being led into grievous Mistakes, if you entertain a Persuasion, that *that* is the purest Church, or Society, which hath the fewest Ceremonies not enjoyn'd in Scripture. This may easily be gather'd from the Instances already mention'd; but I leave them to your own Application.

'Tis true, and it is generally acknowledg'd by the *Conformists*, that nothing is to be receiv'd as an Article of Faith, that is not reveal'd in Scripture: Nor is any thing to be admitted as an Essential part of Divine Worship, that is not the Subject of a Divine Precept: But external Rites and Circumstances of Worship, are of another Nature, and being not forbidden of God expressly, or by consequence, are not sinful: *For where there is no Law, there is no Transgression.* Rom. 4. 15. But about this, I suppose, we are agreed: And if you thought our Ceremonies, which are innocent in themselves, so great a burthen for their number, that to ease your selves of it, you must desert our Communion, as soon

as

as you had opportunity, I intreat you to consider, how very few were required of you as Private Men, and how impossible it would be to preserve Peace and Order in the Church, if, for such things, it may be divided and all be put into confusion.

In the *Primitive Church* as many Ceremonies were used, as now are required by the *Church* of *England*; and if they are now sufficient to excuse your Desertion, they would have justified a Separation from the best *Christians* in the Purest Ages. Even in the *Apostles* Days several things were appointed and practis'd, and for some time were not to be neglected or omitted, which yet were only Temporary Institutions, and not design'd to be of Perpetual Obligation. Such were the *Feasts of Charity*, and *the Kiss of Peace*; as also the *Womans Veil*, by which her Head and Face were cover'd in sign of her Subjection. And if the Church had Power to lay aside such Rites, so it hath power also to appoint others of the like Nature, and is obliged to do so upon emergent occasions, as *Christian* Prudence may direct. Particular Ceremonies are liable to such alterations, that when they have been expressive of respect in one Age or Country,

1 Cor. 11. 5, &c.

Country, they become Instances of the contrary in another: But there are Rules about them that are constant and certain in all Times and Places.

1. It is certain that the Publick Worship of God ought to be celebrated with such Ceremonies as are suitable to the Dignity and Solemnity of the Work, and agreeable to the general directions of the Holy Scripture.

2. According to the Holy Scripture the Ceremonies that are us'd in the Church, ought to be expressive of some Duty. So were they that I produced from Scripture; such were also the *smiting on the Breast*, the *lifting up the Hands in Prayer*, *Kneeling* on the same occasion, and the putting on some *New Garment* at the time of *Baptism*: All which things are recommended or alluded to as things approved in Scripture. And one of these was a visible sign of Contrition and Indignation against Sin; another, of the elevation of the Mind to Heaven; the third, of Humiliation; the fourth of putting on Christ, or the New Man. This may shew, how weak the Objection is against our Rites, that they are *Symbolical*; for if they were otherwise, they would be disagreeable to

the *Holy Scripture*; and signifying nothing, they would be good for nothing, but were fit to be rejected as useless and impertinent.

3. The Holy Scripture directs us in
1 Cor. 14. 40. general *to do all things decently and in order*: To distinguish between our own
1 Cor. 11. 22. *Houses* and the *Churches of God*: To *glo-*
1 Cor. 6. 20. *rifie* him with our *Bodies*, as well as our *Spirits*; and particularly it requires us
Psal. 95. 6. to *Worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker.*

4. That External Rites be significant and decent, there ought to be some Conformity between them and the End for which they were appointed. Yet for those that use them it is not always necessary to know the reasonableness of their Institution. They may take an Oath safely by kissing the Book, who know nothing of the Original of that Ceremony, nor are satisfied of the fitness of it. Whatsoever it had at first, Custome hath now impress'd a fitness on it; and it signifies a Solemn Appeal to God the Searcher of Hearts, as much as Words could do, and is by the Law prefer'd before them.

5. The significancy of Ceremonies, and the Measures of Decency are to be taken from Custome, which gives Rules

not

not only for speaking, but also for Actions, Habits, and Gestures. Thus as by Custome the putting off the Hat, bowing and kneeling are Marks of Reverence amongst Men, so they are in our Addresses to God. Indeed the Uncovering of the Head was formerly a Badge of Authority. But Custome hath quite alter'd that signification, and yet hath made it fit to be retain'd for another, and I think you have no exception against our using of it at present, as a sign of our Veneration and Subjection to the Almighty. 1 Cor. 11, &c.

6. The more early that a Ceremony was us'd; and the longer it hath remain'd; the more universally it hath been receiv'd and approv'd, especially by good Men, and the greater good it is expressive of, the fitter it is for continuance. And this may be said for the *Sign of the Cross*, which hath been much oppos'd by the *Separatists*, That in the next Age after the Apostles, if not in their Days, it was every where in use amongst the *Christians*, who testified by it to the World, that they were *not asham'd of the Cross of Christ*, but rather gloried in it, and were ready to suffer for it. So that it was a compendious Confession of their Faith,

of a Visible Creed in which they declar'd to the Eye the same Truth, and their Resolution to adhere to it, that by Words they profess'd to the Ear. And if this last way ought to be approved, the other may not be condemn'd; nor was it by any but the Infidels, or open Enemies of the Gospel. From the Primitive Church it was transmitted down to our own, and being freed by our Reformers from the Abuses which Superstition had added to it by the way, it is prescrib'd in our Liturgy, in the *Office of Baptism*, as signifying the *Dedication* of the Baptized to *him that Died on the Cross for them.* We have good reason therefore not to lay aside a Ceremony that is come to us thus recommended, and is so suitable to the end for which it was employ'd. As for those that cast it out as an *Idol*, they must excuse us, that we cannot comply with them in reproaching, as Idolaters, innumerable Saints and Martyrs that are now *with God*: And that being no *Enemies to the Cross of Christ*, we do not abhor the *Sign* of it.

7. It follows from what went before, that when things indifferent are against *Custome*, they are also against *Decency*, and to be avoided. For a Man

to

to wear Long Hair, had no Moral Evil in it, nor had the Scripture decided any thing about it, yet the Apostle condemn'd it as shameful, and against the Dictate of *Nature*. Not as if it was forbidden by any Law of *Nature*, strictly so call'd; but the meaning is, it was against *Custome*, which is a Law in such cases. It is no small matter then to oppose the *Customs* that have been universally receiv'd, and long continued in the Churches, as the *Separatists* have done, whilst they have been labouring to advance their own Discipline; which, till of late, was never heard of in any part of the World. Charity would teach them not to *behave themselves so unseemly*: But if they will not learn that Lesson, nor cease to be *Contentious*, but obtrude on us their own Novelties, it may be sufficient for us to say, That *we have no such Customs, neither the Churches of God.*

1 Cor. 11. 14.

1 Cor. 13. 5.

1 Cor. 11. 16.

8. It also follows from what was said before, that things which, according to *Custome*, are signs of Irreverence amongst Men, are marks of Prophaneness and Contempt when they are us'd towards the Almighty. *If ye offer the Blind for Sacrifice, is it not Evil? And if ye offer the Lame and Sick, is it not*

Evil? Offer it now to thy Governour, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy Person? Saith the Lord Almighty, Mal. 1. 8. And this may afford us very useful Advice; for from hence it is clear, that if we rudely rush into his presence without any thing of Ceremony; if we refuse him all outward Respect when he speaks to us in the Assemblies of his People, and will not bow the Knee when we put up our Prayers to him, but call on him in the same Posture as we would talk to our Servants, we affront him in such a Behaviour as we would not offer to our *Governour*, and may justly fear that he will punish our Insolence and Presumption.

If you lay these things together, you may find, that what you call the Purity of your Ordinances, is their defect: That you have acted against the known Rules of *Christianity*, in rejecting the laudable *Customs* of Antiquity, and of the Church which you have deserted; and that the way which you have forsaken, expressing much more Reverence to the Almighty than that in which ye are now engaged, is, for that reason, to be prefer'd before it.

As

As for outward Bodily Worship, it is particularly forbidden by the *Directory* at one time, and never so much as recommended at any time, (*a*) nor do I find that it is as much as permitted in any part of the Publick Service. I know not whether kneeling be at all used in your Meetings; but I have reason to think, it is not much. And yet you cannot be ignorant, that it is a fit Gesture for Prayer, and I suppose in your Family-Prayers you do not reject it. But if this be so, it may seem strange, that you should think the House of your Publick Worship the only place wherein you would shew Irreverence to the Divine Majesty.

I need not here treat of all the particulars in debate between us; but one thing I will not omit, because it demonstrates to the *Separatists* the weakness of their Exceptions against the Ceremonies of the Church, and shews the Irreverence that is us'd in your Meetings, in a thing of very great moment. What I mean is the *Lord's Supper*, which in your way is appointed to be received *Sitting*. But is there any Precept for

(*a*) See Dr. *Hammond*'s View of the New Directory, Sect. 23.

this in Scripture? Or if none can be found, is it not against the *Second Commandment*? Is it not an *Idol*? That is the way of reasoning us'd by many *Dissenters*, and this instance may shew them the folly of it. To make up this matter, Mr. *Cotton* (*a*) gives us a reason for *sitting* at the *Sacrament*; which is, that it is of *Symbolical use to teach the Church their Majority over their Ministers*, who if they be their true Pastors, are *over them in the Lord*. He also tells us, *That Christ administred it to his Disciples sitting*; but the Learned amongst you will inform you, that this is a mistake. Others contend that a *Table-gesture* is to be us'd, but neither hath this any ground in Scripture. It is certain the matter is not decided there; and if it were not determin'd by our Superiours, the best way would be to enquire which Gesture would be most expedient for so great a Solemnity. Now your Table-gesture being the same that you use *at home in your own Houses*, seems very unfit for a Religious Feast, at which we are entertain'd by the Almighty King, the Lord of Men and Angels. It argues a great piece of Familiarity with him,

(*a*) Way of the Churches in *New England*, c. 4. Sect. 2.

which

which he hath no where approv'd. He hath no where requir'd you to sit down, but ye will do it without his Call. And if this seems decent and respectful, *Offer* the like *to your Governour*: *Will he be pleased with it, or accept your Persons?*

The *Publican*, that would *not so much as lift up their Eyes to Heaven, but smote upon their Breast*, did that which was suitable to his Condition: But your Behaviour at the Sacrament, is very different; for rejecting the several Gestures which are expressive of Reverehce, you only admit of that which hath nothing in it of Respect; and which you would not presume to use before a *Governour*, without his express Command, or Invitation.

As for the Gesture of *Kneeling*, I think it is very proper for this occasion. It is fit that we should be then in a Posture of Praying, when we joyn with the Minister in the Petition, That *the Body and Blood of Christ, may preserve our Bodies and Souls unto Eternal Life.* And since Christ is to be Worshipped, surely it is very fit that we pay Him our Adoration, when He comes to consign over to us, the Inestimable Benefits

fits of His Cross and Passion. And now I leave you to judge, with which of us this Ordinance is celebrated with greater Reverence, or in a Way more suitable to the Dignity of so Venerable a Mystery? Or which of us does most appear to *discern the Lord's Body*?

II. It hath been said, *That the Way of the Separation affords you Communion with a better People than those which you have deserted.* And not to enquire how justly this Comparison is made Partial, as it appears, but to make as short Work as may be, I think we may agree in this; That the *Conforming Churches* consist of a Mixture of Good and Bad Men. And since the last are not excluded, the Question is, Whether this justifies your Separation? For if That be Sinful, the Pretence of your joyning with a better People, must fall to the Ground. And so I might dismiss this Debate, having said enough for the Decision of it before. Yet to set the present Case in a clearer Light, I shall further shew,

1. That for Private Persons to withdraw themselves from a Church, because Ill Men are tolerated in it, and that they may form a Purer Congregation, consisting

sisting only of *Visible Saints*, as they call them, is not according to Scripture, but directly against it.

2. If it were admitted, it would be attended with great Evils.

1. It is not according to Scripture, which indeed gives us an Account of the Corruptions, and want of Discipline in many Churches, yet says not a Word to justifie a *Separation* from them, but much for the Condemnation of it; whatsoever might be pleaded in its Defence. To give an Instance out of many: In the Church at *Corinth*, the Incestuous Man who had committed a Crime that was not *so much as Nam'd among the* Gentiles, was tolerated; and they *mourned not* that he might have been *taken away from among them.* Besides him, there were many others that were guilty of great Immoralities; and the Apostle was afraid that he should have cause *to bewail them*, as not having *repented of the Uncleanness, Fornication and Lasciviousness which they had committed.* He complains of their going *to Law before the Unjust: Brother with Brother, before the Unbelievers.* He complains of their Irregularities in their Assemblies, and Disorders in their Feasts of

1 Cor. 5. 1, 2.

2 Cor. 12. 21.

1 Cor. 6. 1, 6.

of Love. *One*, he says, was *Hungry*, *and*
1 Cor. 11. 21. *another was Drunken.* And such were
their Miscarriages even at their Meet-
ings for Religious Worship, that he de-
1 Cor. 11. 17. clares, their *coming together was not for*
the better, but for the worse. Now here
was a very sad Face of Affairs: And
what Remedy doth the Apostle apply
on this occasion? Doth he say, That
their Constitution was dissolv'd, and
they were no longer a Church? Or
doth he say, That the better part should
desert the worse, and make up a *Church*
by themselves, consisting only of *Visible*
Saints? No such matter: He considers
them all together as a Society gather'd
out of the World, and Consecrated to
God, and addresses his first Epistle to
them in this Style; *To the Church of*
1 Cor. 1. 2. *God which is at* Corinth, *to them that are*
Sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be
Saints: And he directs the second in
like manner; supposing them to have a
Federal Holiness as a Church, when of
Inherent Piety there was so great a de-
fect among them, and when so many
of them were guilty of great Enormi-
ties. He labours to inform them, and
for that purpose he charges them to ex-
pel the Incestuous Man from their
Communion. He reproves the Vicious,
and

and threatens them with Ecclesiastical Censures. He admonishes the Litigious to submit their Differences about things *pertaining to this Life*, to the decision of some Arbitrator chosen amongst themselves. He commands them *to do all things decently, and in order*; and warns them not to come irreverently to the *Lord's Supper*, but to *examine*, or approve *themselves*, before they did partake of it. All this while, he says not a Word that might encourage any of them to forsake the Publick Assemblies on the Account of the Scandals that were given. But on the contrary, he requires them all to be *compacted*, or (a) *knit together*. He puts them in mind that they were Members of the same Community, and that there ought to be *no Schism in the Body*. And says he to them, with great Tenderness and Affection, *I beseech you, Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no Divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joyned together in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment.* 1 Cor. 12. 20, 25, 27. 1 Cor. 1. 10.

2. The Pretence of Separating from the Church, because Wicked Men are

(a) Καταρτιζεσθε, 2 Cor. 13. 11.

tolerated,

tolerated, being admitted, it would be attended with great Evils. What they are, will better appear when I come to treat of the Consequences of *Schism*, but the Consideration of some that relate to our present Case, may not here be omitted.

1. If this Pretence were allow'd, it would lay a Foundation for perpetual *Divisions*. For then any Party professing greater Sanctity, how unjustly soever, might withdraw themselves from the Church, and say, *Stand from us, for we are more Holier than you.* And then others might say the like to the first Dividers, and a third sort to the second, and so on, as long as it was possible to make any farther Subdivision.

An *Eminent Nonconformist*(a) has given us this Account of a Person, who would reform his Bible in such a manner, that 'he cut out the Contents, Titles, and 'every thing else but the Text it self, be-'lieving them to be Humane Devices, 'and consequently Idolatrous. And agreeable to this Action was the rest of his Conversation. For 'he would come

(a) Mr. *Ball*. See his Answer to *Can.* p. 137, 138.

at

'at no Man, nor suffer any Man to come 'at him. But having shut up himself and 'his Children in his House, Sustenance 'was brought to them, and put in at 'some Hole, or Window; but he suf-'fered no Man to come and Minister 'unto them; no, not when he and they 'lay Sick, and in great Misery. And 'when, by Order, his House was bro-'ken open, two of his Children were 'found Dead; and one of them had 'been so long unburied, that the Body 'was corrupted, and it did annoy the 'Room. This Man lived up to his Principles, and pursued them as far as they would go. And his Example may teach us, that if we think our selves obliged, when the Law permits us, to forsake the *Church*, because it admits of a Mixt *Communion*, and that we may joyn with a better People, we should soon see the like occasion to desert these also. And then we must seek out other Company, and so go on till we are pent up within so narrow a compass that we could move no farther.

2. This Pretente being admitted, Men professing much Religion, when they have little of the Sense or Power of it, would be encouraged to raise and keep up such Disturbances as might serve

serve the designs of their Ambition, or other Worldly Ends. And whilst the Meek and Lowly *would study to be quiet*, and *do their own Business*, the Assuming and Arrogant would be New-modelling the *Churches*. (*a*) Mr. *Baxter*, a Man of great Experience, says, That *he never saw one* Schism *made, in which Pride conjunct with Ignorance, was not the cause*; and *that, to his remembrance, he never knew one Person forward in a* Schism, *but Pride was discernably his Disease*. Pride is so active a Principle, that *only by it cometh Contention*. And if it meets with great Encouragement, as it does too often, there is no doubt to be made of its readiness to furnish the World with Reformers in all Societies and Governments: Reformers, I mean, that would condemn Miscarriages abroad, and bestow bitter Invectives on them at a distance, but cherish them at home. Such Reformers were *Korah* and *Absalom*, and many others; Who, to make themselves Heads of Faction, or considerable in it, have not spar'd to *speak evil of Dignities*, and to cast Re-

Prov. 13. 10.

(*a*) *Baxter's* Direct. p. 745.

proach

proach on the best of Men that stood in their way, whilst in the mean time, *with good Words, and fair Speeches, they have deceiv'd the Hearts of the Simple.*

Not long after the Death of St. *Paul*, there was amongst the *Corinthians* a grievous Schism, a *wicked* and *impious Sedition*, as *Clemens Romanus* (*a*) calls it: And this was kindled, as he informs us, (*b*) by one or two mean Persons, who were Rash and Confident, such as had a high Opinion of themselves, and despised others. And the Incendiaries that have come after them, have so constantly been of that Temper, that to say any thing *in their Vindication*, when *their Cause* will admit of no defence, is to put Fire into the Hands of those who would *burn up the Houses of God in the Land.*

3. This Pretence for Separation being admitted, it would put Men upon a Work, for which they are no way fit, which is the *Judging one another before the Time.* And in this, the Uncharitable, and Censorious, the Envious, and

(*a*) Clem. Roman. Epist. ad Corinth. c. 1.

(*b*) Ἐν ἢ δύο περίοικοι, &c. c. 47. Ὀλίγοι περίοικοι ὀρμηθεὶς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐθάδες, &c. c. 1.

Malicious, would have so great a stroke, that it could not be expected but that they would be forward to condemn others that are better than themselves; and that they would be most busie in gathering *New Churches*, who were fit to be Members of none. *You pretend in vain*, says St. *Austin* (a) to the *Donatists*, *that before the Time of Harvest, you fly from the Tares, which*, you say, *are mixt amongst us; whereas you your selves are the Tares: For if you were the Good Grain, you would bear with that Mixture, and not separate your selves from the Corn of Christ.*

4. Separation from a Church, upon a Pretence of joyning with a *better People*, casts a Reproach upon the Deserted. And if it be an Offence to treat a Private Person contumeliously, or diminish his just Reputation, it must be a greater, when the same is done to a *Community*. You have need therefore to be very sure that you were in the right, when you did forsake the *Church of England*, as unworthy of your Communion, and prefer'd before it, the

(a) Fingitis vos ante tempus messis fugere permixta Zizania, quia vos estis sola Zizania. Nam si frumenta essetis, permixta Zizania toleraretis, & à segete Christi non vos divideretis. August. Epist. 171.

Dis-

Dissenting Congregations. It will not be sufficient for you to say, That amongst the *Conformists* many were guilty of great Immoralities; for it would be easie for them to recriminate, and the truth is, there have been and are on both sides, great Numbers of Men notoriously Vicious, but we must leave them to *bear their own burthen. Offences will come*, and such there were in the Apostles Days, in the Churches at *Corinth* and *Philippi*, in the Churches of the *Galatians*, and in all the Seven Churches of *Asia*. Yet on that occasion, no allowance was given to any of the Faithful to withdraw themselves from the Publick Assemblies. It is therefore to be suppos'd that you can prove some very hainous thing, not only against particular Persons, who profess themselves *Conformists*, but against the *Conforming Churches* as such; some great thing, for which they ought to be forsaken, or you are very injurious to them in your desertion of them: For by this you do what in you lies, to dishonour them; and to fix a publick Disgrace, or Infamy upon them, in the Eye of the World.

It is now your Business to exalt the Societies with which you are at present in Communion, as well as to depress those which you have deserted; a thing very usual in such cases. But that you may state the Account aright, when you are comparing the *Old Churches* with the *New*, as they are call'd, you ought carefully to examine, whether the last be Churches in reality, or in Name only: Whether any of your Pastors have Right to exercise their Office in the Separate Way; and whether the far greater part of them are not meer Usurpers, that have no just Title to the Ministry, and the Administration of the Sacraments. All these are things of great weight; and what I said before, may help you in your Enquiries into them, and convince you, if you please to consider it attentively, that you have been mistaken about them; and that where you thought your selves safe, you are in great danger.

You have seen some of the sad effects of your Separation, upon *a Pretence of joyning with a better People.* Yet I have the Charity to believe, that you expected much good Fruit from it: But had

had you consulted (a) Mr. *Baxter*, he would have instructed you better; for he says, That *to Reform the Church by dividing it, is no wiser than to cut out the Liver, or Spleen, or Gall, to cleanse them from the Filth that doth obstruct them, and hinder them in their Office: You may indeed thus cleanse them, but it will be a Mortal Cure. As he that should divide the Kingdom into two Kingdoms, dissolveth the old Kingdom, or part of it at least, to erect two new ones: So he that would divide the* Catholick Church *into two, must thereby destroy it, if he could succeed, or destroy that part which divideth it self from the rest. Can a Member live that is cut off from the Body, or a Branch that is separated from the Tree?* And to these Questions I shall leave you to reply.

III. It hath been said, That the *Way of the Separatists conduces more to your Edification; and that if you would provide what is best for your Bodies, you ought more especially to do so for your Souls: That you are more Edified by the* Dissenting Ministers, *than by the* Conforming Clergy, *and think it requisite to be Hearers of those by whom you profit*

(a) Christian Direct. p. 739, 740.

most. And this, I confess, is Popular, and affords a very ready Answer, such as it is, to the strongest Arguments that can be produced against you. But that you may not be too confident of it, the *Assembly* of *Divines* tell you, (*a*) that *the gathering of Churches out of Churches, hath no footsteps in Scripture, is contrary to Apostolical Practice, is the scattering of Churches, the Daughter of Schism, the Mother of Confusion, but the Step-Mother to Edification.*

Mr. *Baxter* also says, (*b*) That *Divisions among Christians do greatly hinder the Edification of the Members of the Church: While they are possess'd of Envyings and Distaste of one another, they lose all the benefit of each others Gifts, and of that Holy Communion which they should have with one another. And they are possess'd with that Zeal and Wisdom, which* James *calleth Earthly, Sensual, and Devilish; which corrupteth all their Affections, and turneth their Food to the Nourishment of their Disease, and maketh their very Worshipping of God to become the increase of their* Sin. *Where Divisions and Contentions are, the Members that should*

(*a*) See their Preface before the *Jus Divin. Reg. Eccles.*
(*b*) Christian Direct. p. 741.

grow

grow up in Humility, Meekness, Self-denial, Holiness and Love, do grow in Pride and perverse Disputings, and passionate Strivings, and envious Wranglings. The Spirit of God departeth from them, and an Evil Spirit of Malice and Vexation taketh place; though in their Passion they know not what Spirit they are of. Whereas if they be of one Mind, and live in Peace, the God of Love and Peace will be with them.

To speak more distinctly to this Matter, I shall enquire,

I. What is the True Notion of Edification.

II. What you understand by it, and whether you rightly judge, how it is best promoted.

III. Whether according to your sense of it, it be a good Rule, that you may, or ought to follow those Teachers, by whom you can most be Edified.

IV. Whether this may justifie your present Separation.

I. I am first to enquire, What is the True Notion of *Edification*. And to

clear this, it is to be consider'd, that the word which is Literally render'd *Building*, is often in the Holy Scripture applied to Spiritual Matters; and being taken in a good Sense, as commonly it is, it signifies the Advancement of Persons in some Spiritual Good: And to *Edifie* them, is to do that Work of *Charity* whereby we become beneficial to their Souls. *Knowledge puffeth*, saith the Apostle, *but Charity Edifieth*, 1 Cor. 8. 1. *Comfort your selves together, and Edifie one another*, 1 Thes. 5. 11. *Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouth, but that which is good to the use of Edifying, that it may minister Grace to the Hearers*, Ephes. 4. 29. *Let us follow after things which make for Peace, and things wherewith one may Edifie another*, Rom. 14. 19. *Let every one please his Neighbour for his good to Edification*, Rom. 15. 2. In which places, it is the *Edifying* of our Neighbours that is required of us; and that of our selves is never enjoyn'd under this Expression, nor can it well be sought but in conjunction with the Publick good.

'Tis true St. *Paul* tells us, That he that *speaketh in an unknown Tongue Edifieth himself*, 1 Cor. 14. 4. But this is mention'd but as a mean use of his Gift;

and

and one that Prophesied and instructed others, was for this reason prefer'd before him. For, says the Apostle, *Greater is he that Prophesieth, than he that speaketh with Tongues, except he Interpret, that the Church may receive Edifying*, 1 Cor. 14. 5.

It is certain that the Business of *Edification* duly managed, hath a principal regard to the Church. And by how much more any thing is beneficial to that, by so much more it ought to be esteem'd. *Forasmuch*, says the Apostle, *as ye are zealous of Spiritual Gifts, seek that ye may excel to the Edifying of the Church*, 1 Cor. 14. 12.

There is no doubt to be made, but the use of this Word *Edification* is taken from another *Metaphor*, which signifies the *Church*. For the *Church* being in Scripture call'd a *House*, and the Members of it being said to be *Living Stones*, the adding to it such Materials, and the polishing and perfecting those that are in it, are the *Edification* of it. 1 Tim. 3. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 5.

This *House* is already built and established *upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone*. But it is not as yet finish'd, nor will it compleatly be so till the end of the World. Ephes. 2 20.

And

And we shall be reckon'd amongst the *Builders*, or *Edifiers* of it, if we repair its Breaches; if we enlarge it, or raise it higher, or contribute any thing to its strength, or splendor: That is, if we bring new Proselytes into the Church, or confirm those that are in it; if we are instrumental in the Conversion of some, or in advancing any in Knowledge and Piety, in Faith and Practice.

Without Practice there is no true *Edification*, but all that are duly exercis'd in Holiness, are perfected by it, and others are invited and drawn into the Church by their Example. *The Churches*, says St. *Luke*, *had rest throughout all* Judea, *and* Galilee, *and* Samaria, *and were Edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied*, Acts 9. 31.

The *Church*, in many respects, may be compar'd to a House, but more especially for the *Unity* and *Order* of Building. But on both these I have treated before; and what I shall add, will only be farther to explain what is meant by *Edification*, and to remove the Mistakes about it.

1. *Unity* is required in this Spiritual *House*, and all the parts of it ought to be

be *compacted*, like those of an Artificial Building, or a Natural Body. The more they are so, the better they are prepar'd for *Edification* and Improvement in things Divine. They are *call'd to Peace in One Body*, and *being knit together* in it, *they increase with the Increase of God*, Coloss. 2. 19. Colos. 3. 15.

As *Divisions* are the cause of Weakness and Deformity in this Body; so on the contrary, *Union* helps to strengthen and adorn it. Thus when the *Schism*, which I mention'd before, was broken out amongst the *Corinthians*. 'The 'Vile, or Ignoble, on that occasion, 'rose up against the Honourable; Per'sons of no Reputation against those 'that were highly esteem'd; the Foolish 'against the Wise, and Young Men a'gainst the Aged. For which cause 'Justice and Peace were far from them. 'Every one did forsake the Fear of God, 'and in his Faith became blind. None 'of them lived according to the Rule of 'his Precepts, or walked worthy of 'Christ. But they all followed their 'own depraved Lusts, having taken 'up an Unjust and Impious Envy, by 'which Death entred into the World. This is the Account that *Clemens Roma-*

nus

πνς (*a*) gives of them: But he also acquaints us, that when they were United, 'Their Piety was wonderful, their Hospitality magnificent, and their Knowledge perfect: That they were all of 'an humble Mind, boasting of nothing; 'more willing to be subject than to govern and to give, rather than receive: 'That they were content with the Portion which God had allotted to them, 'and carefully attending to his Word; 'That they had Hearts enlarged (*b*) 'with Mercy, and that before their 'Eyes they had the Sufferings of *Christ*: 'That a profound and advantageous 'Peace being given to them, they had 'an insatiable desire of doing good, and 'that then there was upon them all a 'plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit: 'That being fill'd with Holy Purposes, 'they did with chearfulness, and a pious Confidence, stretch forth their 'Hands to Almighty God, beseeching 'him to be merciful to them, if unwillingly they sinned against Him: That 'their care was Day and Night for the 'whole Brotherhood; that through the

(*a*) Vid. Ep. 1. ad Corinth cap. 1 & 2.
(*b*) ἐστερεωμένοι ἐπὶ τῆς σπλάγχνοις. Vid. Cotelet. Not. Col. 83, 84.

'Mercy

'Mercy of God, and a Good Conscience, the Elect might be saved: That 'they were Sincere and Inoffensive, and 'forgetful of Injuries, and that all Sedition and all Schism was then abominable to them: That they lamented 'the Faults of their Neighbours, and 'esteem'd the Wants of Others as their 'Own. That they were firm and steady (a) in doing good, and forward to 'every good Work: That they were 'adorn'd with a Conversation altogether Vertuous and Venerable, and did 'all things in the fear of God, whose 'Commandments were written upon 'the *Tables of their Heart.*

By this, and many other Examples, it appears, that the Unity of the *Christians* is highly beneficial to them. And we may add, That it also promotes the *Edification* of the *Church*, by the strong Inducement it affords to those that are without, to embrace the Christian Faith, and become Members of the same Community. *They will see*, says Mr. (b) Baxter, *that the Design and Doctrine of* Christianity, *is good and excellent, beseeming God, and desirable to*

(a) ἀμετακίνητοι.
(b) Chr. Direct. p. 739.

Man,

Man, when they see it does produce such good Effects, as the Love, and Unity, and Concord of Mankind. And it is an exceeding great and powerful help to the Conversion of the World in this respect, because it is a thing so conspicuous in their sight, and so intelligible to them, and so approved by them. They are little wrought on by the Doctrine of Christ alone, because it is visible, or audible but to few, and understood by fewer, and containeth many things which Nature doth distaste. But *the Holy Concord of* Believers, *is a thing that they are more able to discern and judge of, and do more generally approve. The* HOLY CONCORD *of* Christians, *must be the* CONVERSION *of the* Unbelieving World, *if God have so great a Mercy for the World; which is a Consideration that should not only deter us from* Division, *but make us zealously study and labour with all our Interest and Might, for the healing of the Lamentable* Divisions *amongst* Christians, *if we have the Hearts of* Christians, *and any sense of the Interest of* Christ.

2. The Church resembles a House in *Order*: And *Order* is to be observ'd in all our Endeavours for the Edification of it. This Living Building resting upon Christ, and *being fitly framed together,*

gether, groweth unto One Holy Temple in the Lord. And as an Organical Body, being *fitly joyned together and compacted* by every Ministring Joynt, supplying something according to its Power, in proportion to the other parts, *it increaseth, to the Edifying of it self in Love.* Ephes. 2. 21. Ephes. 4. 16.

Mr. Baxter says very well, (a) *That Enemies, both Spiritual and Corporal, are deterred from assaulting the Church, or any of its Members, while they see us walk in our Military Unity and Order. In this posture every Man is a Blessing and Defence unto his Neighbour. As every Soldier hath the benefit of all the Conduct, Wisdom and Valour of the whole Army, while he keepeth in his place; so every weak* Christian *hath the use and benefit of all the Learning, the Wisdom and Gifts of the Church. The Hand, the Eye, the Ear, the Foot, and every Member of the* Body, *is at ready to help, or serve the whole, and every other particular Member as its self.* But *if it be cut off, it is neither helpful, nor helped. O what a Mercy is it for every* Christian, *that is unable to help himself, to have the help of all the Church of God? Their Directions, their Exhor-*

(a) Christian Direct. p. 738.

tations,

rations, their Love, their Prayers, their Liberality and Compassion, according to their several Abilities and Opportunities? As Infants and Sick Persons have the help of all the rest of the Family that are in Health.

II. I am now to enquire, what you understand by *Edification*, and whether you rightly judge, how it is best promoted. Now as far as I can learn from those that pretend to it for the Defence of their Separation; you take that to be *Edifying*, that raises in you some sensible Devotion, that excites in you some Religious Affections, such as Love, Joy, Fear, or the like. Other things might be added, but I suppose, you have these chiefly in view, when you prefer the Service in your Meetings, before that of our Churches. The way of Praying in your Assemblies, we are told, is more Edifying, because you can be warmer, or more fervent in it, than in the use of the prescribed Forms: The Preaching amongst you is more Edifying and Powerful than that of the Conforming Clergy, because you feel the working of it more upon your Hearts; and to argue against this, is to dispute against your own Experience. Nevertheless,

theless, I shall examine, whether there are such Advantages in your way as are pretended; and whether the things, on which you fix so high an estimate, deserve the Preference which you have given them.

1. To begin with the way of Praying us'd in your Meetings, give me leave to tell you, That it may be, the Effects of it are not of such a Nature as you conceive, nor any Argument of its Excellency. It cannot well be thought, that a Person should commonly make better choice of the matter of Prayer, or express it better, or in fitter terms, when he speaks with little Deliberation, or none at all, than he himself, or wiser and better Men, can in a Form of Words, when they have long meditated on the Subject, and employ'd many and serious Thoughts about it. It must be therefore the Novelty of his Expressions, and probably something in the Tone of his Voice, which makes his Performance so agreeable, and has such an influence upon you. But you are not to think, that God is at all wrought upon by the Variation of Phrases, or the Modulations of them. Nor are these things apt to

make any deep Impressions on the Nobler Faculties of the Soul; but having done their Work in the Fancy, or Imagination, they seldom rise higher; nor can they do it by any thing of Vertue in themselves.

Extempore Prayers may have more Power than *Forms* to produce in some Ill Men a kind of *Extempore* Devotion; some Appearances of Religious Love, and Fear, and Joy. But these being rais'd by Surprize, when the Surprize is over, they are gone. And yet there are many that put great Confidence in such vanishing things: Many that live comfortably on the reflection on those delightful Dreams, esteeming them Realities, and clear Evidences of their Sanctification.

Many have been famous for what they call the *Gift of Prayer*, who have miserably deceiv'd themselves, and been only as *Sounding Brass*, when they were esteem'd as *Oracles*. And many that have thought themselves much Edified by hearing the *Extempore Prayers* of other Men, have been under the same Delusion. In such cases I doubt not but both Speakers and Hearers feel such Motions within them, as bear a resemblance of true Devotion: And these they

they do not impute to Natural Causes, as a little Philosophy would teach them, but to Inspiration, or the Effectual working of Sanctifying Grace: And so they grow up into a strong Opinion, that they are the Favourites of Heaven, when they allow themselves in the practice of Injustice, of Cruelty, and Oppression, and other grievous Sins.

I deny not, that some Persons, who have the Gift of Elocution, may, upon occasion, express the Matter of Prayer in suitable Terms: Nor do I question but to hear them, when they do so, may be of benefit to others. Yet if they put too high a value upon this, and if it brings them into a contempt of all Liturgies, what they took to be a peculiar Priviledge, becomes a dangerous Snare to them; and instead of promoting, cannot but hinder their Edification.

For my own part, I think a well composed Liturgy, has much the Advantage of your way of Praying, and is much fitter, in Publick Assemblies. It best secures the Honour of Religion in the Solemnities of Worship, and affords us the greatest help in the part that we bear in it. In the use of it we have no occasion to be in pain, or fear, about the next Words that may fall from the Minister,

however he be a Person of mean Abilities; nor have we cause to condemn those that before came from him, or any need to revolve them in our Minds, as being uncertain whether we may say *Amen* to them. Having approv'd of all before, we have nothing to do but to keep our Minds intent on the Matter, as it comes before us, and to exercise our Devotion as it directs us, and then we may have a comfortable assurance, that we perform a Service that is acceptable to God, and agreeable to his Will.

As for our own Liturgy, the Learned Dr. *Beveridge* hath very well shew'd the Excellency of it, and its Usefulness for Edification. And could I prevail with you to peruse the Sermon (*a*) attentively, wherein he treats of this Subject, I should hope it would give you much Satisfaction.

What I shall say more of our Liturgy is taken from a great Authority, and express'd in these Words: 'The Book 'of *Common Prayer*, was compil'd in the 'Times of the *Reformation*, by the most 'Pious and Learned Men of that Age, 'and defended and confirm'd by the

(*a*) Sermon on 1 Cor. 14. 26.

'Mar-

'Martyrdom of many; and was first 'Established by Act of Parliament in the 'Time of King *Edward* VI, and never 'repeal'd, or laid aside, save only in the 'short time of Queen *Mary*'s Reign, 'upon the return of Popery and Super-'stition: And in the first Year of 'Queen *Elizabeth* it was again reviv'd, 'and Established by Act of Parliament, 'and the Repeal of it then declar'd by 'the whole Parliament, to have been 'to the great decay of the due Honour 'of God, and Discomfort of the true 'Professors of the Truth of Christ's Re-'ligion: And ever since it hath been 'us'd and observ'd in the best Times of 'Peace and Plenty that ever this King-'dom enjoy'd, and contains in it an ex-'cellent Form of Worship and Service 'of God, grounded upon the Holy 'Scriptures, and is a singular Means 'and Help to Devotion.

2. It hath been said, That the Way of Preaching in your Meetings, is more Edifying than that which you heard in the Conforming Churches. And I confess, there would be no denying of this, if we may believe some of your Teachers, who have pretended, that till they had their Liberty to Preach, the Gospel was imprison'd, or the Nation de-

priv'd of it. But few of you, I suppose, are thus perswaded. And yet I know not whether you have any better Reason for the Preference which you give to your Pastors, and for having their Persons so much in admiration.

I deny not but there are amongst them Persons of great Abilities. But I think some of their Brethren, much their Inferiour, have had the Reputation of more Powerful Preachers, who acquir'd it only by the use of a Set of Phrases, in which they had no meaning, or a bad one. And many have thought themselves much Edified by such a Sound of Words, when they understood nothing by it; or, which is much worse, receiv'd under it some false Doctrine. Such a Doctrine is that of the *Antinomians*, which being wrapt up in Expressions of Scripture, hath pass'd without any great Examination, and gain'd an easie admission amongst many; notwithstanding the plain opposition that it bears to the Design of the Gospel.

There is no question but the *Antinomian* Doctrine being deliver'd in a pathetick manner, and with agreeable Gestures, may heat the Imagination, and work powerfully upon the Affecti-

on.

ons of those that embrace it; how contrary soever it is to the Holy Scripture. And this may give you some intimation, that you are not to judge of the excellence of Sermons, by such Effects as may proceed from Falshood as well as Truth, or may be owing to the Pronunciation, or Action of the Speaker: But that which is fittest to convince the Reason, and inform the Judgment in *Things Divine*; That which sets these things in the clearest Light, and defends them best; That which best shews the Necessity of Obedience, and urges the Practice of all *Christian Duties* with the strongest Motives; That which most conduces to the *Reformation of Manners*, and to the *Perfecting of Holiness in the Fear of God*, is the best Preaching: And that this is wanting in the *Church of* England, or more abounds in your Meetings, is, in my Opinion, what will not gain an easie Credit amongst Equal Judges.

Yet let us suppose that you have amongst you better Praying and Preaching; Is there any thing wanting with us that is necessary to Salvation? This is not pretended by you. Only you think you may receive greater benefit in your *Congregations*, than was to be

expected in our *Assemblies*. What you seek then in frequenting those *Meetings*, is your own Advantage, without due regard to the Publick Good. But the *Edification* which the Scriptures require you to promote, is that of your Neighbours; and especially that of the *Church of Christ*. So that your Notion of the Thing is at best defective, and too narrow. What other Faults it has we shall see hereafter.

III. The next Enquiry is, *Whether it be a good Rule, that you may, or ought to follow those Teachers, whosoever they are, by which you can most be Edified, or whose Praying and Preaching you approve, as most Beneficial to your selves.* To which I answer, That a Rule which would give you Liberty or make it your Duty to shift Communions as often as you expect something better for your selves, or more *Edifying*, as you call it, in the next Change, ought to be rejected as Absurd, and as a Ground of perpetual Divisions. A numerous Congregation acting by this Rule, might soon be split into Twenty, or many more; according as the Members of it differ'd about the *best* Means of their *Edification*. And if every one was left to judge for himself,

self, who is the most *Edifying Minister*; and all thought that they might admit of none but the *Best*, the Number of their Teachers must be equal to that of their own Opinions about them; and there would be no fixing them under One; unless they could All be perswaded, that this One is the Best for them All. But as Mr. Baxter says, (a) *Almost all have a very strange diversity of Apprehensions. One thinks that this is the* Best *way, and another that the other is the* Best: *And let them Reason and Wrangle it out never so long, usually each Party still holdeth its own, and hardly yieldeth to anothers Reasons.*

At *Corinth* some said they were of *Apollos*, as well as others did that they were of *Paul*: And as far as we can find, both these Parties thought they did the Best, and contended with equal Zeal. Which yet might seem very strange, were it not usual with Men in such Debates, to be govern'd by Fancy more than Judgment. For *Paul* was in nothing inferiour to *the very chiefest Apostles*, and in his Labours and Sufferings he exceeded the rest. *Paul* was *caught up in the Third Heaven*, and had such an

1 Cor. 3. 3.

2 Cor. 11. 11.

(a) Cure of Church-Divisions, p. 359.

abun-

2 Cor. 12. 2, 7. *abundance of Revelations*, that he was in danger of being *exalted by them above measure*. And it might well have been thought, that he was the Person upon Earth, from whom one should have been most willing to receive Instruction. Nevertheless some prefer'd *Apollos*, who had no such Priviledges, before him. And probably the reason was, because Acts 18. 24. *Apollos* was an *Eloquent Man*, as well as Mighty in the Scriptures. But of *Paul* it was said, That *his bodily Presence was* 2 Cor. 10. 10. *weak, and his Speech contemptible*. And for this reason, it seems, he was esteem'd amongst them a *weak Preacher*. And such ill Judges would the People often be in like Cases, if these were left to their Decision.

But the Apostle, to set the *Corinthians* right about the Matter in Controversie, informs them, that he himself and *Apollos*, were not design'd to be Leaders of Factions, but were unanimous in their Work in the Service of the same Master: That they were both *Ministers of Christ*, and both employ'd by Him, the one in *Planting*, the other 2 Cor. 3. 7. in *Watering*. But, says he, *Neither is he that Planteth any thing, nor he that Watereth any thing, but God that giveth the Increase*. And from Him they might have

have expected a Blessing either by *Paul*, or *Apollos*, or much weaker Instruments in a way of *Unity* and *Order*: But in their Factions preferring of their Teachers before one another, they were *Carnal, and walked as Men.* They hindred their own benefit, when they disturb'd the Churches Peace. 1 Cor. 3. 3.

Probably they expected some great Benefit from their Zeal which they express'd in their several Parties, and their endeavours to have the Best Teachers: But they took wrong Measures to obtain it, and were reprov'd for their Contentions. And many there are at present who oppose the *Unity*, and break the *Order* of the Church, in hopes of better *Edrfication*. But I shall shew that the Means which they use, are contrary to the End which they propose, and therefore must frustrate their Expectation, and bring guilt upon their Souls. This indeed may be gather'd from what went before; and these two things which I shall add for illustration of it, are only Consequences of what I have already prov'd.

1. It follows from that which was said before, that what is against the *Unity* of the Church, is also against the *Edi-*

Edification of it; and consequently, of the parts whereof it consists. That which separates the *Stones* of this *Building* from one another, hinders the conveyance of that Vital Spirit, which would animate them all. That which divides this *Body*, weakens it, and puts it into a Sickly Condition. The Members that make a Schism *in* it, throw it into dangerous Convulsions: And they that make a Schism *from* it, give it a grievous Wound; and afterwards can neither grow up with it, nor without it.

If therefore they that make Divisions could speak with the *Tongue of Angels*, we ought to *avoid* them. If in some things we might arrive at great Knowledge by their Instruction, we must avoid them notwithstanding. Such *Knowledge* would be apt to *puff us up*, but it is *Charity that Edifieth*. And *Charity*, says *Clemens Romanus*, (a) *Admits of no Schism. Charity is not Seditious, but doth all things in Concord. All the Elect were perfected by it, and without it nothing is acceptable unto God.*

(a) Ἀγάπη σχίσμα οὐκ ἔχει, &c. Ep. ad Corinth. c. 49.

2. What

2. What is against *Order*, is also against the *Edification* of the Church, and consequently, of the particular Members of it. That which justles the *Stones* of this *Spiritual Building* out of their places, hinders it as much as possible, from growing *unto a Holy Temple in the Lord*. That which diverts the parts of this Body, from their proper Offices, or puts them out of Joynt, hinders the Nourishment, abates the Strength, and destroys the Comelines and Beauty of it. That which brings Confusion into any Society Ecclesiastical, or Civil, tends to the Ruine of it, and fails not of doing Mischief to it.

To prevent this, even they that were inspir'd from Heaven, and had *Psalms* and *Doctrines*, *Tongues*, and *Revelations*, and *Interpretations* by Miracle, were yet limited in the Exercise of their Gifts, and to restrain them, these two Precepts were given by the Apostle: *Let all things be done to Edification: Let all things be done decently and in order.* Decency and Order have such a connexion with *Edification*, that what promotes *Them*, advances *This*: What is contrary to *Them*, is contrary to *This* also.

1 Cor. 14. 26, 40.

It

It is no wonder then that St. *Paul* was so much concern'd, when he heard that among the *Thessalonians*, there were some that walked *disorderly*, (*a*) or did break their Ranks. For as such Men might be useful in their proper Places, so out of them they hinder the *Edification* of the Church, and are wont to be Disturbers of the Publick Peace. Many in the way of their Vocation might have excell'd, who going *beyond their Line*, intrenching on the Rights of others, and assuming an Authority which did not belong to them, have become great Incendiaries; and Persons of that Character have been most pernicious to the best Societies.

2 Thess. 3. 11. See also v. 6. and 1 Thess. 5. 14.

When such Disturbers invade the Offices of the Church, it is not enough to say, That they Act the Part well, which they have taken upon them, when it is none of their own; or that they have great Gifts, and are well qualified for the Sacred Function, when their assuming it is a meer Usurpation. There were many, doubtless, in *Israel*, who could have managed the Business of Sacrificing, more dextrously than some of the Priests themselves; But it

(*a*) ἀτάκτως.

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appertained not to them; and if they undertook it, they incurr'd the Indignation of the Almighty. And in a *Christian Congregation* there may be some Private Persons, who are of better Capacity, or much fitter for the *Ministry*, than the Minister himself. But having no Lawful Call to it, it *appertains not* to them: And if, in Confidence of their own Abilities, they set up for Spiritual Pastors, they are so far from promoting *Edification*, that they become open Enemies to the Church, and liable, as are also their Followers, to a just Condemnation.

IV. The fourth Enquiry is, *Whether your hopes of being better Edified, may justifie your Separation.* That is, if I have stated the Matter rightly, Whether your false Hopes may justifie a sinful Practice. And this, I think, may easily be resolv'd. It appears from what was said before, that your Practice is against the Church, as a *Visible* and a *Regular* Society: That it is against the *Unity* and *Order* of it; and consequently, that it is against the *Edification* which the Scripture requires; as pulling a House in pieces is contrary to the Building it up, and throwing it in Heaps, is con-

contraary to the adorning and reparation of it.

'Tis true, the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against the Church; nor shall the Fury of Man be able to destroy it: But to bring *Divisions* and *Disorders* into any part of it; to Separate from any sound Members of it, and to form Societies, or be of those, that are opposite to it, is to strike at the Whole, and to attempt the Ruine of it: As it is also to act against Christ himself, who hath purchas'd and cemented it with his own Blood.

SECT.

SECT. V.

HAving examin'd the Arguments which have been offer'd on your part, to excuse you from the guilt of *Schism*; I am now to treat of the Consequences of it. And these are so deplorable, and of such a Nature, that they induced many Antient and Modern Writers, who had them in view, to reckon This amongst the worst of Crimes.

Mark those, says the Apostle, which cause *Divisions and Offences:* And he had reason to put these things together. For *Divisions* having their usual effect, become *Offences*, and may well be esteem'd amongst the greatest *Scandals*. Rom. 16. 17.

I pretend not to give any compleat History of the Evils which *Church-Divisions* have produced: Yet I shall briefly shew,

I. That they have hardned the Infidels in their Unbelief, and hindred their Conversion.

II. That they have brought a Reproach on the Reformation of the Church, and hindred the Progress of it.

III. That they have given occasion to the spreading of many detestable Errors in Matters of *Religion*.

III. That they have greatly encouraged *Immorality*.

I. They have hardned Infidels in their Unbelief, and hindred their Conversion. This, says *Clemens Alexandrinus*, (a) is *the Thing which they first produce against us; We ought not, say they, to believe, because of the Difference of Sects amongst you.*

(a) Strom. Lib. 7. p. 753.

To

To the *Corinthians*, on the occasion of their Divisions, *Clemens Romanus* (a) does thus address himself: *Your Schism*, saith he, *hath perverted many, hath discouraged many: It hath raised Doubts in many, and Sorrow in us all.* And a little after, (b) *It is shameful, Beloved; yea, very shameful, and unworthy of a Christian Conversation, to hear, that the most Firm and Antient Church of the* Corinthians, *should by one or two Persons, be led into Sedition against their Pastors. And this Report is not only come to us, but to those also who are disaffected and estranged from us: Insomuch that by your Folly, the Name of the Lord is blasphemed, and danger accrues to your selves.*

It hath been found by experience, that when there was the greatest *Union* amongst the Faithful, it rais'd in those that were without a very high esteem of *Christianity*, and strongly invited them to embrace it. But when *Schism* prevail'd, it furnished the Adversaries of the Truth, with Exceptions against it, and made them obstinate in their Errors. This Effect, as I shall shew, it

(a) Ep. ad Corinth. c. 46.
(b) C. 47.

hath had upon *Jews*, *Heathens*, and *Mahometans*.

1. To begin with the *Jews*; They argue from the Divisions amongst the *Christians*, that the *Messiah* is not yet (*a*) come. For, say they, 'Was it not 'foretold by the Prophets, that in his 'Days, and amongst his Followers, 'there should be Unity and Concord; 'but how is this accomplish'd amongst 'those that believe in Jesus? Where is 'their Unanimity and Harmony of Af-'fections? Where is their Mutual 'Love, and the promised Peace? Are 'they not broken into many Sects? 'Are they not ready to devour one a-'nother? To this indeed we may reply, That *Jesus Christ* did break down the *Wall of Partition* that was between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and gathering a People out of both, he hath reconcil'd them in *One Body*: That when great Multitudes were converted to Him, (*b*) whatever they might be before, *They were of One Heart, and One Soul*: That when the Number of *Christians* was mightily increas'd over the

Acts 4. 32.

(*a*) Vid. Episcop. Instit. Lib. 3. Sect. 4. c. 21.
(*b*) See Dr. *Pocock*, on Micah 4. 3.

World,

World, the *Heathens* said of them with Admiration, *See how they mutually Love one another*: That the Doctrine of *Jesus Christ*, disposes all that receive it heartily, to be of this Temper, and to *follow after the Things which make for Peace*; and that all his Genuine Disciples do so, of whom the Predictions are to be understood. And this I take to be a very sufficient Answer to the Objection; yet it can hardly be hoped, that any great regard will be paid to it, when the *Schism* amongst the Professors of *Christianity* so powerfully strike upon the Senses of the Adversaries, and turn their Eyes another way.

2. The *Divisions* amongst *Christians*, have made the Heathens more obstinate in their Errors, and been a great Scandal to them. From hence it is, that they who most violently oppos'd the Gospel have been encouraged and animated in their Enmity against it: And others that had something of Inclination to it, have been made averse from it. The Unbelieving *Greek*, says St. *Chrysostom*, (*a*) comes to us, and thus he pleads, *I would be a* Christian, *but I know not to which Party I should joyn my*

(*a*) Tom. 4. p. 799.

self: For there is much Contention and Sedition, and many Tumults amongst you. Which Opinion then shall I prefer? Which shall I chuse? When every one saith, The Truth is on my side. There is no great strength in such Exceptions, yet they are obvious and popular, and with many they have been of greater force than the clearest Demonstrations.

3. As for the *Mahometans*, we are inform'd by a Person of great Worth, (*a*) who lived among them, 'That to 'divide the *Christians*, hath always been 'the Master-piece of the *Turkish* Policy, 'and this Disunion amongst them hath 'avail'd the *Ottoman* Interest more than 'their Swords, and confirm'd their Ob-'stinacy in Religion with a Miracle, as 'if the Division of Christian Princes 'had been an effect of their Prayers, 'and a concession of Divine Providence 'to their daily Petitions.

Mr. *Baxter* also tells us, (*b*) That *doubtless the Divisions of the* Christian *World have done more to hinder the Conversion of Infidels, and keep the* Heathen, *and* Mahometan *World in their damnable*

(*a*) *Ryeau's* History of the *Turkish* Empire. p. 80.
(*b*) Christian Directory, p. 740.

Igno-

Ignorance and Delusions, than all our power is able to undo; and have produced such Desolations of the Church of Christ, and such a plentiful Harvest and Kingdom for the Devil, as every tender Christian Heart is bound to lament with Tears of bitterness. If it must be, continues he, *that such Offences shall come, yet woe to those by whom they come.*

II. Divisions amongst the Reformed, have brought a Reproach upon the Reformation, and hindred the Progress of it. *Camden* informs us, (*a*) that *when the Sectaries* in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, made an open Separation, *The* Papists *thereupon clapped their Hands, and suggesting that there was no Unity in the Church of* England, *they draw many to their Party.* By this means we have been on the losing Hand, and this way they have gain'd more Proselytes, than by all their Books of Controversie. You have been often told, how their Agents have been employ'd to *refine the* Protestants, to teach them a more *Spiritual Way of Praying* than that of a Liturgy, and to free them from all *Smacks of Ceremonies*: It being held meritorious by

(*a*) Cambd. Elizab. A. D. 1583.

the Managers of this Affair, if under any shape they could form a Party that would help to ruine our Constitution. But in the late Times, the Men of this Character, had the Confidence to lay aside their Disguise, and disdaining to act any longer behind the Curtain, they did their Work openly, and in the Face of the Sun: And what Assistance you gave them in it, was visible to all the World. This I write, not to insult over you, but in great Pity, to raise your Indignation against *Schism*, which engaged you in a shameful Confederacy. It was *Schism* that made you, and other Dissenters before you, the Instruments of the open Enemies of our Reformation: And *Schism*, if you persist in it, will detain you in their Service. Whether you intend it or not, you will be digging in their Mines, or building up their shattered Walls: And by your Hands they will carry on their Designs with hopes of Success, which they despair of accomplishing by their own.

III. Church-Divisions have given occasion to the spreading of many detestable Errors in Matters of Religion. They are apt to unsettle the Minds of Men, and prepare them for Changes.

We

We may gather from the Words of St. *Paul*, *Ephes.* 4. 12, 13, 14. that they who forsake the Officers which Christ hath given *for the perfecting or joining together of the Saints*; They that are not compacted in his Mystical Body, but broken off from it, are *as Children tossed to and fro, by the Sleight of Men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

Such Deceivers are then most busie to exercise their Arts, when they are remov'n, whose watchful Eye should discover their Impostures, and who are appointed for that purpose. And thus when the Bishops and the Clergy that adher'd to them were laid aside in this Nation, False Teachers did boldly shew their Heads, and made a Prey of very many. *Salmasius* himself (*a*) complains, That *Innumerable Sects which before were condemn'd to Hell, and lurked in Darkness, did then break out all on a sudden, and appear'd in an open Day.* And this was the cause that he alter'd his Judgment about Episcopal Government, against which he had written with great

(a) Ab Episcopatus abolitione consecuta est horrenda confusio & perturbatio Religionis, Sectis innumerabilibus quæ antea Orco damnatæ in tenebris delitescebant, de repente qua data porta undequaque in lucem erumpentibus. Salm. Resp. ad Milton.

Zeal,

Zeal, and concluded, that in *England* especially, it ought to have been continu'd.

This is the Testimony of a Foreigner, but our Natives speak to the same purpose. Mr. *Pagit* (*a*) makes a heavy Lamentation, That the *Wolves who were wont to lie in the Woods, were come out into the Sheepfold, and did roar in the Holy Congregation.* And by another (*b*) we are told, That the *Discipline of the Church was laid in her Grave, and that the Putredinous Vermine of bold Schismaticks, and Frantick Sectaries gloried in her Ashes.*

Mr. *Edwards* declares, (*c*) That this *Land was become in many places a* Chaos, *a* Babel, *another* Amsterdam; *yea, worse, and beyond that.* And he says, That *more Damnable Doctrines, Heresies, and Blasphemies had been of late vented, than in Fourscore Years before.*

He also says to the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, (*d*) *You have cast out Bishops, and their Officers, and we have many that cast down to the Ground all Ministers in all the Reformed*

(*a*) Heres. p. 41. A. D. 1645.
(*b*) Dr. [illegible]
(*c*) Gangr. Part 1. p. 120. Printed A. D. 1645.
(*d*) A. D. 1646.

Churches:

Churches: You have cast out Ceremonies, as the Cross in Baptism, kneeling at the Lord's Supper; and we have many that have cast out Sacraments, Baptism, and the Lords Supper. You have put down the Saints Days, and we have many that make nothing of the Lord's Day.

Mr. *Edwards* (*a*) in the compass of a few Pages, reckons up a vast Number of Heretical and Blasphemous Tenets, published within the space of four Years: And he says, That *Things grew every Day worse and worse*; and that *it was hard to conceive them to be as bad as they were.*

This *Edwards* is one that was not likely to be partial on the side of Prelacy: For he tells the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament, (*b*) That *With Choice and Judgment he had Imbarkt Himself, with Wife, Children, Estate, and all that was dear to him, to sink, or perish, or come safe to Land with them: And that he had done this in the most doubtful and difficult Times, and in a malignant place amongst Courtiers.*

(*a*) See *Gangr.* Part 1. P. 18, &c.
(*b*) Ep. Ded.

IV. *Church-*

IV. *Church-Divisions* have greatly encouraged *Immorality*: And this Effect they had visibly in this Nation, in the Times of the great Confusion. The Disorders that were then introduced in Matters Ecclesiastical, were attended with others in Things of Morality: And if we may believe the *Nonconformists* themselves, the many Heresies which were spread abroad, were accompanied with a great Corruption of Manners, over the Kingdom. On which Occasion the Assembly of Divines said, (*a*) *The Lord hath strangely made way for Union, by the bitter, woful, and unutterable Fruits of our Divisions, which have almost destroyed, not only the Ministry, but even the very Heart and Life of Religion and* Godliness.

Others also of the *Presbyterians*, crying out against the horrible Wickedness which did then abound, ascrib'd the Growth of it to the Increase of the Sectaries, as They call'd them. But we may justly reckon the Accusers in that Number, and leave a great share of the Matter in charge with them, who by revolting from their Superiors, and de-

(*a*) Epistle to the Reader before *Jus Divin. Minist. Evangel.*

serting

serting their Lawful Pastors, did break down the Fences, and open a Passage to all Iniquity.

To come nearer to the present Time; It is Notorious, that since the last opening of your Meetings by the *Toleration*, Impiety hath been gathering Strength, and Profaneness hath made such Progress, that it is become too hard for all our Laws. It is not doubted, but some New Law is wanting to suppress it: And if that be obtain'd, it may be fear'd, that the Success would not answer our Desires, as long as the *Schism* remains, which is at the Root of this Evil; and is the great cause, why Immorality hath so much spread it self, and boldly shew'd its Head in defiance of all Authority.

But what Affinity is there between *Schism* and *Immorality*, or how is the last of these a Consequence of the former? To which I answer.

1. That *Schism* is a Means of depraving the Conscience.

2. It inclines Men to Infidelity.

3. It brings Religion into Contempt.

4. It is destructive of Charity.

5. It

5. It weakens the Ecclesiastical Discipline, which was design'd for the Punishment of Offences.

6. It hinders, and sometimes frustrates the Endeavours of the Pastors of the Church, for the Suppression of Vice, and the Advancement of Piety.

1. *Schism* is a means of depraving the Conscience; and consequently of promoting *Immorality*. For being the occasion of spreading of Errors, which are inconsistent with Holiness, the Practice which is govern'd by them, when they have perverted the Judgment, must be so too. And when Men have been taught to *call Good, Evil*, and *Evil, Good*, their Actions will be suitable to those Instructions. We are inform'd by (*a*) *Thucydides*, That in the Times of Sedition in *Greece*, the *Signification of Words was alter'd*: So that *a Brutish Hardiness was accounted True-hearted Courage: Provident Deliberation, a decent Fearfulness: Prudence, a pretence for Cowardice.—In short*, says the Historian, *for Persons to be of a Kindred, was not so near as to be of a Society*; on which account *they were ready to under-*

(*a*) De Bello Pelopon. Lib. p. 195. Edit. Oxon.

take

take any thing, without making any Disputes about it. And thus, when the Church has been divided, the Dividers have changed the Names of Things: And what, in other cases, they would have approv'd, they suffer not to pass without a sharp Censure, when it is against their Faction; and what they would otherwise have condemn'd as a hainous Crime, they consecrate into a Duty, or an Act of Worship, when it is done by themselves, and for the Interest of their Party.

2. *Schism* inclines Men to Infidelity, and by degrees leads them to it. Dr. (a) *Owen* confesses; That *it constantly grows to further Evil, in some to Apostacy it self.* In some it hath this effect, That they embrace one Errour, or Evil Practice, after another, and being unstable and prepar'd for all Changes, they usually grow worse and worse. Thus some from declaiming against the Common-prayer Book as an *Idol*, came to call the Holy Scripture a *Golden Calf.* And many who have been accustomed to shift their Principles upon any New Occasion, have turn'd Scepticks, or Atheists, at last; and renouncing the fear of Dei-

(a) *Owen* of Schism, p. 55.

ty,

ty, have lived *without God in the World.*

3. *Schism* brings Religion into Contempt, and exposes it to derision. 'The 'Doctor of the *Gentiles* saith, *If an Idiot 'then come in and hear you speak with se-'veral Tongues, will he not say that you 'are mad?* And certainly it is little bet-'ter when Atheists and profane Persons 'do hear of so many discordant and con-'trary Opinions in Religion: It doth 'avert them from the Church, and 'make them *sit down in the Chair of the 'Scorners.* These are the Words of the Lord (*a*) *Bacon*: And they have been confirm'd by sad Experience.

4. *Schism* is destructive of Charity. And from hence it is, that Persons *who provoked one another to Love and to good Works*, when they remain'd in the same Communion, being divided, have rejoyced in Evil, and triumph'd in the Falls of one another. Mr. *Baxter* (*b*) tells us, That *he had great Opportunity in his Time, to see the working of the Mystery of Iniquity against Christian Love, and to see in what manner Christ's House and Kingdom is Edified by Divisions*: And

(a) Bac. Ess. 3.
(b) See the Preface to his Cure of Church-Divisions.

says

says he of himself, *I thought once, that all that talk about Schism and Sects, did but vent their Malice against the best Christians under those Names: But since then, I have seen what Love-killing Principles have done. I have long stood by while Churches have been divided, and sub-divided: One Congregation of the Division, labouring to make the other Contemptible and Odious, and this call'd the Preaching of the Truth, and the purer Worshipping of God.*

Charity being expell'd, it is succeeded by Envy and Strife, by *Confusion, and every Evil Work.* A false Zeal usurps the place of true Piety, and often pushes Men on to the greatest Enormities and Acts of Cruelty. This effect it hath often had amongst Christians; and in the Days of the Emperour *Julian*, when they were much divided, it transported many of them into such Rage against one another, (a) that the *Apostate* was in hopes the Church would perish, by their Mutual Animosities, and Contentions.

5. *Schism* weakens the Ecclesiastical Discipline, which was design'd for the Punishment of Offences; and which

(a) Vid. Ammian. Marcellin. Lib. 22. c. 5. cum Notis Hadr. Vales.

put a powerful Restraint on Wickedness, when it remain'd in its full Vigour. But when it is broken, it is rendred impracticable, or ceases to be a Terrour to Evil-doers. For as the *Jews*, who would not be prevailed with, to live according to the Law of *Moses*, deserted *Jerusalem*, and resorted to the Temple which *Sanballet* had built at *Garizim* (a); so when a Church is divided into opposite Communities, Offenders that would not be endur'd in one, fly to another for Refuge. And then they are like to have no great regard for an Excommunication, when it dismisses them from one, to another Society, which will hardly fail to call it self the purer of the two, or to pretend to better means of Edification.

It may be thought, that a Party being Separated from the Church, upon a pretence of greater Purity, would not receive into their Communion other Deserters, who are Notorious for their Immorality. But this has been contradicted by frequent Experience; and particularly it was so in the case of *Novatianus* and his Followers: For however they profess'd a very rigorous strict-

(a) Vid. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. Lib. 2. cap. 8.

ness,

ness, yet they receiv'd into their Society *Novatus*, a Man of contrary Principles and loose Morals. But that was no Matter, as long as he serv'd their Designs. They could connive at his former Crimes, when he was engaged with them in *Schism*, and Communication of Guilt had made them One.

6. *Schism* hinders, and sometimes frustrates the Endeavours of the Pastors of the Church, for the Suppression of Vice, and the Advancement of Piety; and renders their Condition like that of the *Jews*, when they were Rebuilding the Walls of *Jerusalem*, and *held a Weapon in one Hand*, whilst they *Wrought in the Work with the other*. Nehem. 4. 17. They cannot lay out their whole Strength against the Immoralities of the Times, and for the promoting of Holiness, when they are diverted from it by a necessary Defence of their own Constitution.

In this Defence they must expect to suffer many Reproaches from the Seditious, who, when they have least to say for their cause, are usually most forward to cast Aspersions on the Pastors and People which they have deserted, that it may not be thought, it was for nothing that they made a Separation.

But the Pastors of the Church commonly bear the greatest share of this, as well as other Persecutions: And then if the Calumny with which they are loaded, is believed, it does infinite Mischief. It renders their *Persons* despicable, and their *Ministry* useless. It makes their Reproofs of Sin appear ridiculous; and be they innocent as they will, the imputation of Wickedness, which is fastned on them, gives encouragement to those that are under the Guilt of real Crimes, and becomes an Inlet to all Debauchery.

The

The CONCLUSION.

I Have now gone over the Things which I design'd to treat of: And if you have well consider'd what has been said, perhaps you may see cause to say to one another, in the Words of Mr. *Baxter*, (a) *Alas, dear Brother, that we should not yet know that our own Uncharitable Divisions, Alienations, and Separations, are a Crying Sin! Yea, the Crying Sin, as well as the Uncharitableness and Hurtfulness of others. Alas, will God leave us also, even to the Obdurateness of* Pharaoh? *Is there not Crying Sin with us? What have we done to Christ's Kingdom, to this Kingdom, to our own Friends, Dead and Alive, to our selves, and alas, to our Enemies, by our Divisi-*

(a) Defence of his Cure, Part 2. p. 6.

ons? And do we not feel it? Do we not know it? Is it to us, even to us a Crime intolerable, to call us to Repentance? Woe to us! Into what Hardheartedness have we sinned our selves! Yea, that we should continue in the Sin, and passionately defend it! But to Sum up all.

Would you bring the Kingdom of Christ to Desolation, or are you willing to see the Ruine of his House? Would you hinder the Unbelieving World from receiving the Gospel, or would you harden them in their Infidelity? Would you blast the Honour of our *English* Reformation, and give Proselytes to the Church of *Rome*? Would you occasion the spreading of many false and damnable Doctrines, which cast Reproach on the *Christian* Name, and are pernicious to the Souls of Men? Would you keep open a free passage for all Iniquity, and encourage Vice to appear abroad in great Pomp, without Shame, or Fear? *Schism* is the direct way to all this, and the Means which you have chosen, answer the Ends which you have in view.

But would you rather see the Kingdom of Christ in a flourishing Condition, and the House increase Strength and Splendour, which he hath built with so much care

care and cost? Would you be instrumental to the Conversion of Unbelievers, or would you have them brought from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God? Would you defeat the Designs of the Factors for the Church of *Rome*, who have been so busie in inflaming our Differences, and so ready to make their Advantage of them? Would you hinder the progress of Error, or do what is proper to stop the Mouths of its Advocates? Would you help to stem the Torrent of Profaneness, and drive it backwards? And would you see the open Enemies of Religion, forced into their lurking holes, or flying into their Retreats of Darkness? Would you do what is highly beneficial to others, as well as Glorious and Happy for your selves? Your way is to return to the *Unity* of the Church, which you have forsaken: And if that be so, as I really think it is, my Endeavours to bring you into it, will need no Apology.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 10. in the Margent, for 1 *Cor.* 10. 1. read 1. 10. for *Galat.* 5. 3. r. 5. 13. and for *Revel.* 12. 17. r. 2. 17. P. 13. Marg. l. 6. r. *Octavio.* P. 19. l. 9. for 2. r. 3. and l. 22. r. *their fall.* P. 20. l. 16. r. had been. P. 21. Marg. l. 1. r. Coteler. P. 31. Marg. l. 1. r. *Revel.* 21. 1, 10. P. 32. l. 8. dele *and.* P. 48. Marg. l. 4. r. Reines. P. 52. Marg. l. 4. r. *Act.* 10. P. 53. Marg. r. *Act.* 21. P. 65. l. 5. r. *by him that does so.* P. 69. l. 25. r. know. P. 72. Marg. r. *Tit.* 3. 11. P. 83. l. 13. for *Ark* r. *Altar.* P. 89. l. 28. r. *a third.* P. 100. l. 13. *Can you* — This and the following Lines, to the end of the page, should have been printed in another Character. P. 103. l. 26. r. 1 *Tim.* 1. 18. P. 111. l. 9. r. *you have.* P. 117. l. 10. r. *Ananias.* P. 125. l. 25. r. *to it.* P. 131. l. 25. r. *of the.* P. 134. l. ult. r. *Malala.* P. 155. l. penult. r. *enjoy in it.* P. 158. l. 5. r. *Litany.* P. 169. l. 9, 10. for *their their* r. *his.* P. 174. l. 14. dele *more. Partial,* put the Comma before *Partial.* P. 189. l. 18. dele *the.* P. 191. l. 3. r. *compacted.* P. 201. Marg. l. 1. r. 1 Cor. 3. 4. P. 202. l. 4. r. 1 Cor. P. 203. l. 4. r. *Factious.* P. 210. l. 15. for III, r. IV. P. 213. l. 13. r. *Schisms.* P. 217. l. 13. r. *removed.* P. 230. l. penult. r. *increase in.*